

yam

yetanothermagazine filmtvmusic

feb2009

oscar, bafta & sag,
oh my!

award season is over with indie
spirits, sags, baftas and oscars
handed out.

this season's films that
should have been "best
picture"

in this yam we review //
**benjamin button, slumdog
millionaire, frost/nixon, milk,
the reader, lee-hom wang, franz
ferdinand, united states of tara
and more //**



too weird for words

our thoughts on
**coraline and other
horrorific fantasy
films//**

**We are trying to focus on certain things, but we always – mostly I – end up with our thoughts elsewhere, so I would appreciate a little feedback... a little push by telling me what to include and what to avoid. Thank you to those who emailed me or messaged me with feedback, here's my address:
amy@amy-wong.com**

Write anything you want.

Moreover, thank you to those who contributed on this new issue. You rock.

Now, hopefully you will enjoy the newest issue with us commenting on some “horrorific” films, in honor of the newest stop-motion animated film, Coraline.

amywong //

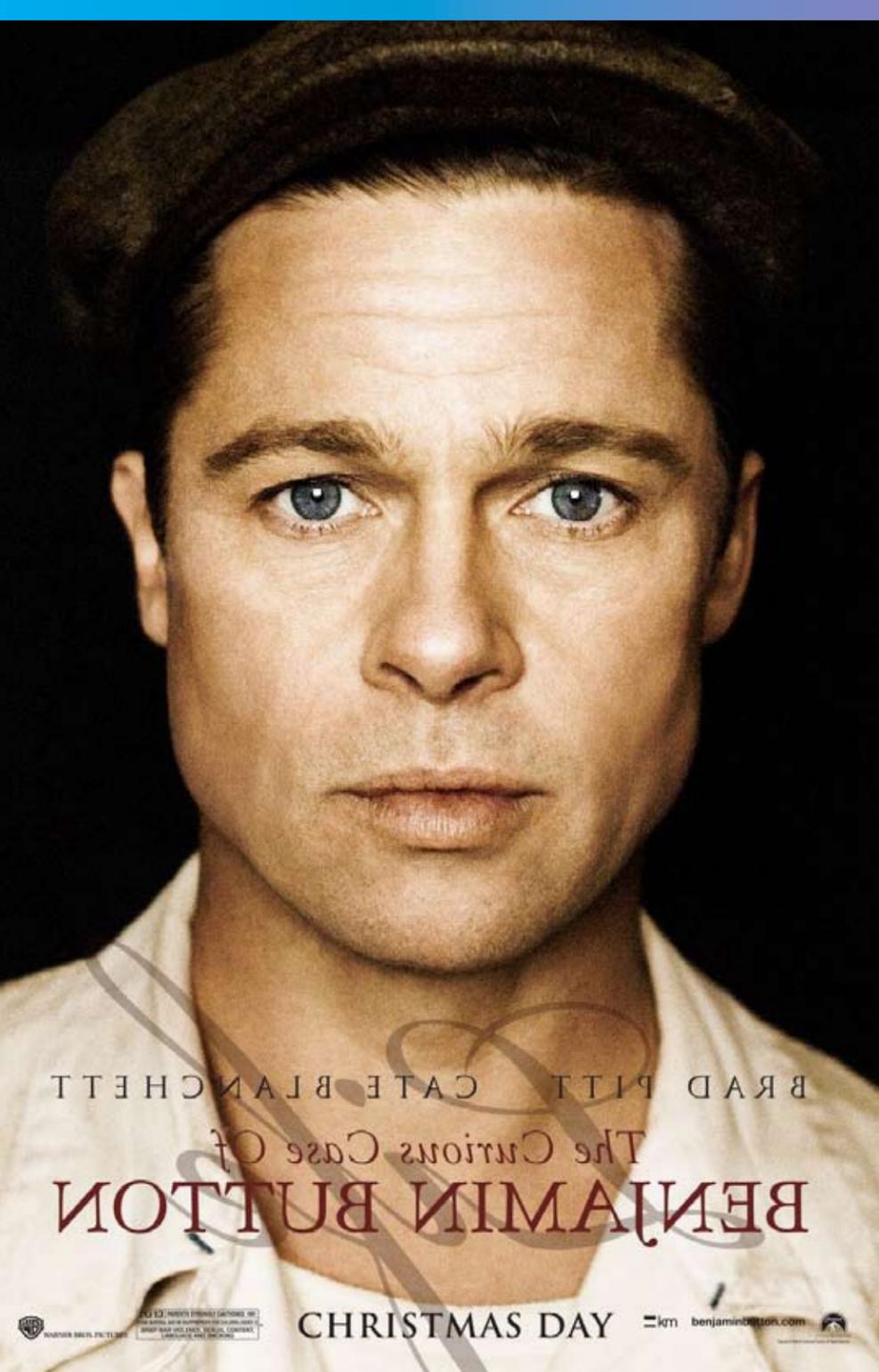
p.s.: nate, you suck. xD

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Second issue of yam, another editor's note! The first issue went better than we expected, I think we started off on the right foot, but we are still trying to work things out.

from the editor //

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best picture nominees

the curious case of benjamin button

Directed by: David Fincher
Starring: Brad Pitt, Cate Blanchett, Taraji P. Henson

Benjamin Button is loosely based on the 1921 short story by F. Scott Fitzgerald of a man experiencing life backwards by being born as an old man and growing younger in time.

The film it's exquisitely shot, but terribly long so make sure you have a permanent marker with you to draw a new crack on your backside. Despite that, Button was very enjoyable with its situations, characters, and performances. If it should win any awards, it should get Best Makeup, Best Cinematography and Visual Effects because it did an incredible job to enhance the film and avoided showing off by doing it.

Nominations: Best Actor, Best Supporting Actress, Art Direction, Cinematography, Costume Design, Directing, Film Editing, Makeup, Original Score, Sound Mixing, Visual Effects, Adapted Screenplay

★★★★☆

frost/nixon

Directed by: Ron Howard
Starring: Frank Langella, Michael Sheen, Sam Rockwell, Kevin Bacon, Oliver Platt, Rebecca Hall

Written for the stage and adapted by Peter Morgan, Frost/Nixon retells the story of a series of post-Watergate interviews between talk-show host David Frost and Richard Nixon.

The fact that Ron Howard decided to make a new movie doesn't mean that Frost/Nixon should be regarded as an instant masterpiece. Sure the film has great acting, and somewhat an interesting story. Every Howard film does, which leaves us watching this thinking "okay... so what?"

Nominations: Best Actor, Directing, Film Editing, Adapted Screenplay

★★★¼☆



milk

Directed by: Gus Van Sant
Starring: Sean Penn, Josh Brolin, James Franco, Emile Hirsch, Diego Luna

Milk tells the story of Harvey Milk, the first openly gay elected official in California, who was assassinated alongside Mayor George Moscone by Supervisor Dan White from San Francisco.

Van Sant has given better films, but still Milk doesn't disappoint with a fantastic cast and a message. To tell you the truth, I never felt that this was a film about gay rights, but a film about politics, the people, and their struggles... Harvey Milk just happened to be gay. The end of the film is really powerful, and will most likely stick with you days after watching the film.

Nominations: Best Actor, Best Supporting Actor, Costume Design, Directing, Film Editing, Original Score, Original Screenplay

★★★★☆



the reader

Directed by: Stephen Daldry
Starring: Ralph Fiennes, Kate Winslet, David Kross

Based on the book by Bernhard Schlink, The Reader explores the life of a law student who re-encounters with his former lover, an older woman defending herself against war-crime charges nearly a decade after WWII.

Daldry re-appears after The Hours with this film that is often mistaken as a holocaust film. The Reader is more of an exploration of characters, the drama in their lives and their secrets. It never shows scenes of the war, so it's not just a holocaust film.

Daldry actually paints an interesting picture by never telling you what to feel for the characters, whether you should feel sorry for Winslet's character or hate her for working under Nazi rules.

Nominations: Best Actress, Cinematography, Directing, Adapted Screenplay

★★★½☆





slumdog millionaire

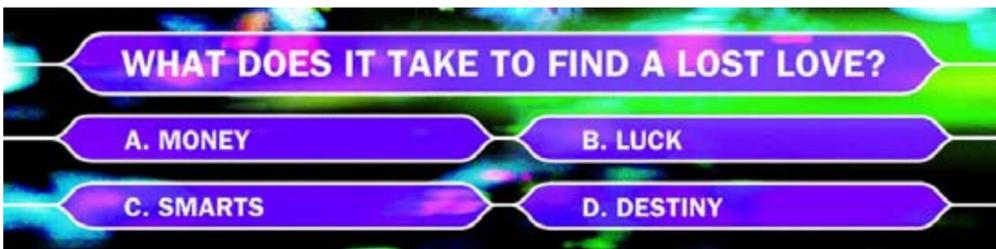
Directed by: Danny Boyle
Starring: Dev Patel, Anil Kapoor, Saurabh Shukla, Freida Pinto

Adapted from the novel by Vikas Swarup, Slumdog tells the story of a Mumbai teen who becomes a contestant on the Indian version of Who Wants to Be a Millionaire, and ends up arrested under suspicion of cheating.

The film gets you into it as the protagonist tells his story in the form of flashbacks, motion blurs and some quick cuts. We can thank Boyle and his collaboration with Anthony Dod Matle, who also worked together on the 2004 film Millions. Add to that a fantastic screenplay by Simon Beaufoy, a fantastic adult and young cast, and you got yourself a feel-good film that will get you to scream "pick up the phone!!" at the screen.

Nominations: Cinematography, Directing, Film Editing, Original Score, 2 Original Songs, Sound Mixing, Sound Editing, Adapted Screenplay

★★★★¼



the should have been best picture

When the Academy Awards decided to unveil their nominations last month, many cried foul play. Many wanted The Dark Knight among the Best Picture nominees, despite the lack of nominations in award shows like the Golden Globes, BAFTAs, and even the SAG.

Here are some of the films, that we thought should have been included as Best Picture nominees.

The only rule was naming an alternate film instead of one of the nominees.

doubt

Directed by: John Patrick Shanley
Starring: Meryl Streep, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Amy Adams, Viola Davis



Written, adapted and taken to the screen by John Patrick Shanley, Doubt tells the story of a nun confronting a priest who is suspected of taking advantage of two of his students.

The film is not only taken to a different level by the way the play translated onto the screen, but has incredible acting by everyone in the cast. It earned four nods for acting (one Lead Actress, one Supporting Actor, and two Supporting Actress), and another nod for Best Adapted Screenplay, so why not a nod for Best Picture already? - amy

Instead of: The Reader



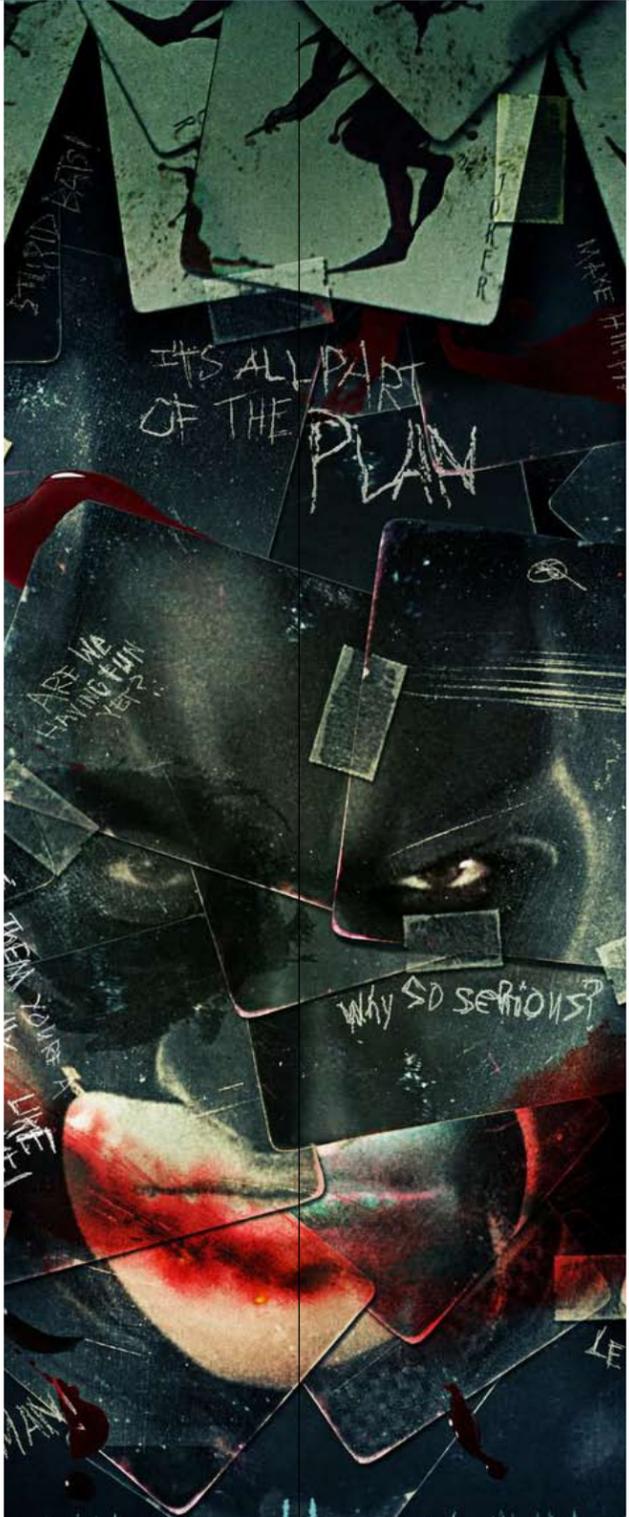
the dark knight

Directed by: Christopher Nolan
Starring: Christian Bale, Heath Ledger, Aaron Eckhart, Michael Caine, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Gary Oldman, Morgan Freeman, Cillian Murphy

The Dark Knight starts off with Batman seeking the help of Lieutenant Jim Gordon and District Attorney Harvey Dent, as they set out to eliminate organized crime that plagues Gotham. When it proves to be effective, a criminal mastermind known as The Joker decides to unleash chaos.

Christopher Nolan virtually reinvents and invigorates the superhero genre with this dark, gritty take on the Caped Crusader. The film features a complex story that questions just how far our heroes should go to protect us from evil. And evil in this film is manifested in the form of Heath Ledger, in a performance that is more of a possession than mere acting. - Dorothy Porker

Instead of: The Curious Case of Benjamin Button



the should have been best picture



the wrestler

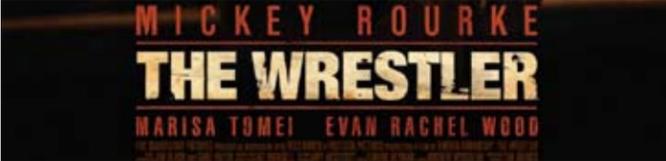
Directed by: Darren Aronofsky
Starring: Mickey Rourke, Marisa Tomei, Evan Rachel Wood

The Wrestler is centered on the life of a retiring professional wrestler trying to balance his love for wrestling, a paying job, a blossoming romance, and the relationship with his stranded daughter.

While nearly everyone praises Mickey Rourke for his interpretation of Randy 'The Ram' Robinson, I also think that the rest of the actors and wrestlers involved in the film worked well enough to make it great.

Doing a film about a professional wrestler past his prime is very hard to pull, but Aronofsky (who should have gotten a nod for Best Director) managed to pull it off very well and even got people that despise pro-wrestling (the WWE style) into praising this film very highly. - my85

Instead of: Frost/Nixon



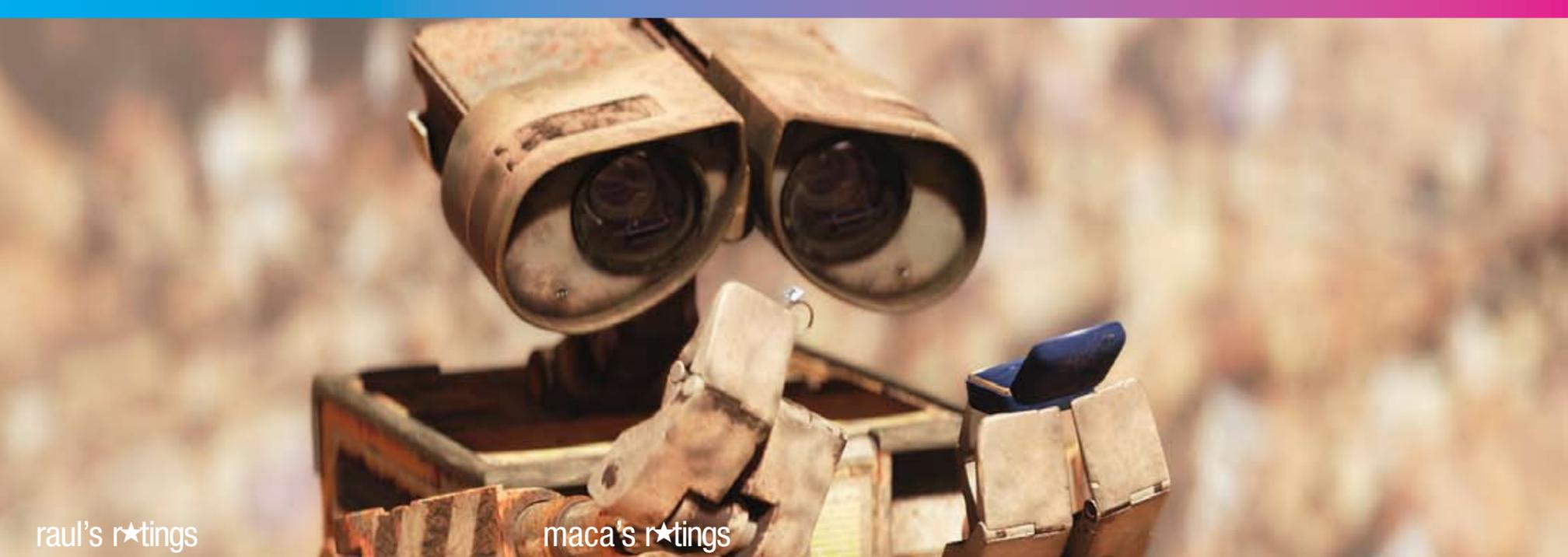
revolutionary road

Directed by: Sam Mendes
Starring: Kate Winslet, Leonardo DiCaprio, Michael Shannon, Kathy Bates

Based on the novel by Richard Yates, Revolutionary Road follows Frank and April Wheeler in the seventh year of their marriage, a couple that seems the epitome of the 1950's perfect American couple. They live in the suburbs with their two children, Frank commutes to New York to work at an office job, while April is an all-around housewife. But they're not happy.

Woefully this film was not recognized by any of the major award entities. This adaptation of Yates' novel is not a film one can sit through easily -- it is, like Mike Nichols' "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" a devastating portrait of two souls entrapped by an unhappy marriage, longing to get out but never being able to do so and taking it out on each other. DiCaprio gives what is probably his best performance and Winslet is, as always, a marvel to behold. The film stays with you long after see it. It's a great accomplishment that should have been recognized. - Dorothy Porker

Instead of: Slumdog Millionaire



raul's ratings

maca's ratings

- Milk ★★★★★
- Kung Fu Panda ★★★★★☆
- WALL-E ★★★★★☆
- The Dark Knight ★★★★★☆
- Waltz with Bashir ★★★★★☆
- Slumdog Millionaire ★★★★★

my85's ratings

- Slumdog Millionaire ★★★★★½
- The Wrestler ★★★★★¼
- WALL-E ★★★★★¼
- The Dark Knight ★★★★★¼
- Vicky Cristina Barcelona ★★★★★½☆



amy's ratings

- Milk ★★★★★☆
- The Curious Case of Benjamin Button ★★★★★½
- Changeling ★★★★★½☆
- Kung Fu Panda ★★★★★½☆
- WALL-E ★★★★★☆
- The Dark Knight ★★★★★½
- Frost/Nixon ★★★★★☆
- The Reader ★★★★★½☆
- Slumdog Millionaire ★★★★★½
- The Visitor ★★★★★☆
- The Wrestler ★★★★★¾☆
- Doubt ★★★★★☆
- Revolutionary Road ★★★★★½☆

- Frozen River ★★★☆☆
- Vicky Cristina Barcelona ★★★★★☆
- Waltz with Bashir ★★★★★☆
- Gomorrah ★★★★★☆
- Happy-Go-Lucky ★★★★★½☆
- Il y a Longtemps que Je t'Aime (I've Loved You So Long) ★★★½☆
- Man on Wire ★★★★★¾☆
- Religulous ★★★★★½☆
- Wendy and Lucy ★★★★★¼☆
- Hito no SEKKUSU wo Warauna (Don't Laugh at my Romance) ★★★★★☆
- Hyakuman-en to Nigamushi Onna (One Million Yen Girl) ★★★★★☆
- The Guitar ★★★★★½☆
- Gran Torino ★★★★★¼☆
- GU~GU Datte Neko de Aru (GouGou the Cat) ★★★★★☆
- Rachel Getting Married ★★★★★¾☆
- The Lucky Ones ★★★★★☆
- Hounddog ★★★★★☆

pg10

slumdog millionaire

CRITICS CHOICE (5)
 Best Picture
 Best Director
 Best Writer
 Best Young Actor
 Best Composer

GOLDEN GLOBES (4)
 Best Motion Picture - Drama
 Best Director
 Best Screenplay
 Best Original Score

SCREEN ACTORS GUILD (1)
 Outstanding Performance by a Cast

PRODUCERS GUILD (1)
 Motion Picture Producer of the Year Award

DIRECTORS GUILD (1)
 Outstanding Achievement in Feature Film

WRITERS GUILD (1)
 Best Adapted Screenplay

BAFTA (7)
 Best Film
 Director
 Adapted Screenplay
 Cinematography
 Sound
 Editing
 Music

the dark knight

CRITICS CHOICE (2)
 Best Supporting Actor
 Best Action Movie

GOLDEN GLOBES (1)
 Best Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role

SCREEN ACTORS GUILD (2)
 Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Supporting Role
 Outstanding Performance by a Stunt Ensemble in a Motion Picture

BAFTA (1)
 Supporting Actor

the wrestler

CRITICS CHOICE (1)
 Best Song

GOLDEN GLOBES (2)
 Best Performance by an Actor in a Motion Picture - Drama
 Best Original Song

BAFTA (1)
 Leading Actor

the reader

CRITICS CHOICE (1)
 Best Supporting Actress

GOLDEN GLOBES (1)
 Best Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role

SCREEN ACTORS GUILD (1)
 Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Supporting Role

BAFTA (1)
 Leading Actress

milk

CRITICS CHOICE (2)
 Best Actor
 Best Acting Ensemble

SCREEN ACTORS GUILD (1)
 Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Leading Role

PRODUCERS GUILD (1)
 Stanley Kramer Award

WRITERS GUILD (1)
 Best Original Screenplay

waltz with bashir

CRITICS CHOICE (1)
 Best Foreign Language Film

GOLDEN GLOBES (1)
 Best Foreign Language Film

WRITERS GUILD (1)
 Best Documentary Screenplay

man on wire

CRITICS CHOICE (1)
 Best Documentary Feature

PRODUCERS GUILD (1)
 Motion Picture Producer of the Year Award

BAFTA (1)
 Outstanding British Film



breakdown



coraline & other horrific films

Directed by Henry Selick (The Nightmare Before Christmas) from the book by Neil Gaiman (MirrorMask), Coraline tells the story about a young girl moving to a new home in an average yet bizarre neighborhood with a noisy-boy-next-door, a creepy Russian acrobat, circus rats, and creepy old ladies. Not satisfied with life with her parents and her new place, Coraline finds a secret door that leads her to an alternate version of her life, where her parents are fun, the boy-next-door doesn't babble and everything seems to be perfect.

Coraline is just another example on the line of great blends between fantasy and horror films. They have it all, art direction, music, a bizarre story, unique characters... they all mix together and seemingly create a brand new world bordering in real life and an alternate world where everything might be possible. Oh! Don't forget the cult-movie status, and the fanbase!

Director Henry Selick has worked with Tim Burton, whose work on films like The Corpse's Bride, and Edward Scissorhands certainly would fit the genre of fantasy horrific films. Other films that are similar in style, and are certainly loved by people keeping an eye on this genre are 1982's The Dark Crystal, 1984's The Neverending Story, and 1986's Labyrinth. Many of these films were brought to life thanks to the work of Jim Henson (and his company), who happened to give us The Storyteller miniseries, and also worked on the 2005 Neil Gaiman/Dave McKean collaboration, MirrorMask.

Yes, people might say most of them are the quintessential Alice in Wonderland story, when in fact they would be the quintessential Hero's Journey described in Joseph Campbell's book, A Hero with a Thousand

Faces. Yes, just like in Guillermo del Toro's 2006 Oscar-winning Pan's Labyrinth (El Laberinto del Fauno), a girl living a life she's not happy with discovers an alternate world that isn't what it really seems to be. Or Terry Gilliam's 2005 Tideland, or Hayao Miyazaki's Oscar-winning animated Spirited Away (Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi), where a girl wanders into the world of gods, witches and monsters.

However, not all follow that formula and they focus more on certain areas like the amount of bizarre, or the art direction. In fact, all of these films tend to be a visual fest with amazing cinematography and great production value. Some of the projects falling in this category are Tarsem Singh's 2006 The Fall or Tim Burton's 2007 Sweeney Todd, about a vengeance-thirsty barber that ends up killing people and making pies with them while singing.

Certainly everything doesn't center on this side of the world, this is why Mamoru Oshii's Angel's Egg (Tenshi no Tamago) makes our article, a bizarre 1985 anime film almost devoid of all dialog about a mysterious unnamed girl with a large egg living in a post-apocalyptic world. And Mai Tominaga's 2006 Wool 100%, often described as fresh and quirky with a feel of a modern fairytale.

Don't get me wrong, Coraline is a beautiful film to watch, great art, pretty cool animation and the soundtrack - top-notch!! - but I couldn't help feeling that the 3D experience was a total lackluster. It worked in some scenes, sure, but they were so scattered that I could have done without it.

The film is for kids, but it's obviously not for those who get easily scared. There are some disturbing scenes, and it's not really a film of happily-ever-after, so the adults expecting a fairytale ending where kids save the day, parents learn to appreciate their kid, and they live content forever together until the end - not gonna happen.

Also, I had to see it dubbed, and I hate dubbing with a passion. However, I have to give it props for being the first 3D film that actually made me want to watch it at the theater. I was expecting more of the 3D experience though... but that's just me being picky. - amy

★★★¾☆

coming soon

March 6th
Paco and the Magical Book (PAKO to Maho no Ehon)
[Normal Edition DVD R2]
[Special Edition DVD R2]
[Blu-ray]

October
Where the Wild Things Are
[Theatrical Release]

Next Year
Tim Burton's Alice in Wonderland
[Theatrical Release]



coming soon



music



lee-hom wang



franz ferdinand

in theaters

- February 6th
 - He's Just Not that Into You
 - Coraline
 - El Cielo Gira (The Sky Turns)
- February 13th
 - Wolfman
 - Gomorra (Gomorra)
 - Two Lovers
- March 1st
 - TOKYO!
- March 4th
 - 12
- March 6th
 - Watchmen
- March 13th
 - Sunshine Cleaning

on dvd/blu-ray

- February
 - Changeling (17th) [Single-disc Widescreen] [Blu-ray]
 - Religulous [Single-disc Widescreen] [Blu-ray]
 - The Passion of the Christ [Blu-ray]
 - Gandhi [Blu-ray]
 - Kramer Vs. Kramer [Blu-ray]
- February
 - Akira (24th) [Blu-ray]
- March
 - Australia (3rd) [Single-disc Widescreen] [Blu-ray]
 - I've Loved You So Long [Single-disc Widescreen] [Blu-ray]
 - Rachel Getting Married (10th) [Single-disc Widescreen]
- April
 - Let the Right One In [Single-disc Widescreen] [Blu-ray]
 - Happy-Go-Lucky [Single-disc Widescreen] [Blu-ray]
 - Milk [Single-disc Widescreen] [Blu-ray]
 - Synecdoche New York [Single-disc Widescreen] [Blu-ray]
- April
 - I.O.U.S.A (7th) [Single-disc Widescreen]
- April
 - The Kite Runner (24th) [Blu-ray]

Heartbeat (Dec. 31 2008)
 To some people Lee-Hom Wang is taking the music industry by storm alongside other popular musicians who are creating the new music coming out from China, but the fact is Heartbeat (or Xin Tiao) is Lee-Hom's 13th album. When I began listening to him, I had a preference for his ballads, but as I grew more accustomed to his sound, I began loving his Chinked-Out style more.

On Heartbeat, Lee-Hom continues his departure from R&B and Hip-Hop sounds

and plays more with rocking electric guitars, and a Rock&Roll flare. People not used to Rock&Roll (think Jailhouse Rock) will not love this departure, and would wish the return of the old him. Sure, this album might not be his greatest work, but he might be getting there. Best tracks? Ai De De Ti (Dirty Love), Chun Yu Li Xi Guo De Tai Yang (The Sun Washed by Spring Rain), and Wo Wan Quan Mei You Ren He Li You Li Ni (No Reason to Pay Attention to You).★★★¾☆

Tonight: Franz Ferdinand (Jan. 27 2009)
 Franz Ferdinand comes back with their third album, which I've been anticipating since I got You Could Have It So Much Better signed almost two and a half years ago.

With a lot of waiting, comes great disappointment.

It's not like the album sucks, but it's not an excellent album... mainly because it's not musically fun nor that interesting, and it certainly doesn't encourage me to give it a

second listen. Possible highlights? Ulysses, and Bite Hard.

After finding the will to listen to this again, the tracks begin to warm up a little... but not enough to become a favorite anytime soon.

★★¾☆☆

big bang

Number 1 (Oct. 22 2008)
Big Bang's first Japanese release, Number 1, consist of 12 tracks including the group's first two Japanese mini-albums and songs from their third Korean mini-album.



I do like and appreciate their sound, a mix between pop and hip-hop, it appeals to many different tastes, their range is not limited and that makes their album a very nice combination of different music styles.

11 of the tracks are in English which as an international listener is an added bonus. The pronunciation is not bad so you actually understand what they are saying. Most of these songs are very much dance club friendly with nice rhythm and beats. The only somewhat ballad is "Haru Haru" a very fast painful song about lost love. Even though the track is in Korean it follows the flow of the album.

The only negative thing I can say about this album is the fact that all the songs are dance club friendly, after a few listens all the songs start to sound very similar. - jumi

★★★★☆

priscillaahn a good day



sue's albums

- Franz Ferdinand - Tonight: Franz Ferdinand ★¾☆☆☆
- Priscilla Ahn - A Good Day ★★★★★½
- The Submarines - Honeysuckle Weeks ★★¾☆☆
- TV on the Radio - Dear Science ★★★★★
- Why? - Alopecia ★★★★★
- The Veronicas - Hook Me Up ★★½☆☆
- Death Cab for Cutie - Narrow Stairs ★★¾☆☆
- Hercules and Love Affair - ★★★★★¼
- Hercules and Love Affair ★★★★★¼
- Jack's Mannequin - The Glass Passenger ★½☆☆☆
- Kelley Polar - ★¼☆☆☆
- I Need You to Hold on While the Sky is Falling ★¼☆☆☆

marnie stern this is it & i am it & you are it & so is that & he is it & she is it & it is it & that is that



photo by: mercurialn

more albums

- Lang Lang - Dragon Songs ★★★★★
- Show Luo - Trendy Man ★★½☆☆
- Johan Soderqvist - Let the Right One In OST ★★★★★
- Clint Eastwood - Changeling Soundtrack ★★★★★
- A. R. Rahman - Slumdog Millionaire OST ★★★★★
- Thomas Newman - WALL-E Soundtrack ★★★★★
- Alexandre Desplat - The Curious Case of Benjamin Button Soundtrack ★★★★★
- Erykah Badu - ★★★★★
- New Amerykah Part One (4th World War) ★★¾☆☆
- Fleet Foxes - Fleet Foxes ★★★★★
- Fleet Foxes - Sun Giant ★★★★★
- Marnie Stern - This Is It & I Am It & You
Are It & So Is That & He Is It & She Is It &
It Is It & That Is That ★★★★★



duncan sheik

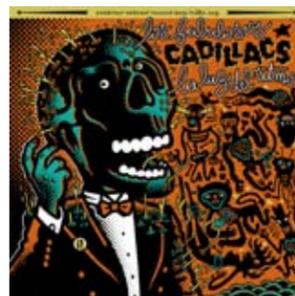
Whisper House (Jan. 27 2009)
The album has the concept. Christopher, an 11-year-old boy whose father dies while flying an airplane during WWII, and whose mother has a mental breakdown upon hearing it, ends up moving to his Aunt Lily's. Only thing is that aunty is a bit nutty, and lives in a lighthouse on the New England Coast... and there are ghosts who sing.

Whisper House is an album, but also apparently a soundtrack for the soon-to-be-opened musical theater piece from the mind of actor Keith Powell (Toofer on 30 Rock). The album also features vocals by Holly Brook, whose voice can be hear in tracks like Better to Be Dead, You've Really Gone and Done it Now, or And Now We Sing – a song that has a Dancer in the Dark vibe. Nonetheless, the album falls a bit short off the mark.

★★★¼☆

los fabulosos cadillacs

La Luz del Ritmo (Jan. 27 2009)
After a seven-year-hiatus, Los Fabulosos Cadillacs are back with La Luz del Ritmo (The Light of Rhythm), which includes five new tracks, six newly-arranged-old-Cadillacs songs, and two covers (including The Clash's Should I Stay or Should I Go).



die-hard Cadillacs fans, or people that for some strange reason haven't heard the original.

Should I Stay or Should I Go (Si Me Quedo o Me Voy, as the chorus says), however, gets an interesting Latin punkish rock vibe treatment. Overall, La Luz del Ritmo is your average sounding Latin music album with a never-missing twist of Cadillacs flare... not bad, but quite forgettable this time.

★★★★☆

melinda doolittle

Coming Back to You (Feb. 3 2009)
American Idol alumni, Melinda Doolittle, is most improved as she releases her debut album titled Coming Back to You, going back to old school R&B and Soul sounds and flare that could remind you of Tina Turner, a lot of Motown, and very little pop, there is no doubt that Doolittle's strength is her voice, which she uses quite masterfully in her songs.

Doolittle also covers Faith Hill's If I'm not in Love, Johnny Mathis' The Best of Everything, and her rendition of the blues standard Dust my Broom.

The album will most likely



alienate many of the per-track-downloaders, and attract the people who still buy records... but that's just me guessing. Highlights: Fundamental Things, It's Your Love, Declaration of Love, Dust my Broom, Walkin' Bluew.

★★★¾☆



out now

- The Fray - The Fray - Feb. 3rd
- Missy Elliott - Block Party - Feb. 10th
- Lily Allen - It's not Me, It's You - Feb. 10th

coming soon

- Beirut - March of The Zapotec and Realpeople Holland - Feb. 17th
- Annie Lennox - The Annie Lennox Collection - Feb. 24th
- U2 - No One on the Horizon - Mar. 3rd
- Watchmen Soundtrack - Mar. 3rd
- Dave Matthews Band - The Best of What's Around Vol. 1 - Mar. 9th
- Taylor Hicks - The Distance - Mar. 10th

united states of tara season 1

★★★★☆

Tara is a wife, a mother of two, and a mural artist. She also has Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID), so sometimes she can be T, a pot-smoking hyper sexual 15-year-old with a thong and chewing gum. Other times, she can be Buck, a heavy drinker and smoker gun-shooter with a loud and profane mouth. Or sometimes she can be Alice, a mouth-washing piano playing Stepford housewife.

Her family, however, they are not far off DID themselves. Characterization is pretty great, and it gives way to both great comedic situations and decent dramatic elements. Toni Collette gives a great performance (my favorite alter is Buck), that may be bordering a little bit on overacting, but still works for me. Diablo Cody's lingo is everywhere, and sometimes makes me think that I can't speak English anymore.

Overall, United States of Tara is not perfect, but is an interesting offering (not even through its half of the season), but we'll have to see where it goes after season 2. - amy



battlestar galactica season 4

★★★½☆

Battlestar Galactica is yet another example of lack of originality in Hollywood these days. A re-imagined series of original 1980's Battlestar Galactica, it is now in its 4th and final season. Though different from its parent series, it has been able to redefine the sci-fi genre and give us a remarkable show, defined by the intensity of its characters.

This season promises to hold the answers to most of the questions posed so far in the series. From the origins of humanity, to the creation of Cylons, this season focuses on

the personal struggle of each character to understand their place in the world. Edward James Olmos and Mary McDonnell are superb in their respective characters of William Adama and Laura Roslin.

The show has lost consistency in its portrayal of critical situations throughout the show due to the involvement of numerous directors. The editing has been down right atrocious in some cases. The solving of these problems could have made the show much better.

The redeeming feature of Battlestar Galactica is its writing and portrayal of characters. Ron D. Moore and his writing team have done an excellent job of creating a story both complex in its nature and yet so simple and understandable for viewers who just want our worth of frakking good time of television viewing every week. - mob

buffy - season 8 - #001-021

by Joss Whedon

Fantasy, Comedy, Drama

★★★★☆

It's been nearly six years since the last episode of Buffy the Vampire Slayer was broadcast on television, but that doesn't mean Buffy Summers and the Scooby gang haven't kept busy, not only fighting demons, but also the government. This new medium also provides the chances to explore wacky and what should put your television budget off-balance.

The Long Way Home (001-004) is the first arc of the season, setting up how the world is working after the release of the Slayer power onto every young woman that could have been the Chosen One. There are at least 1800 active Slayers, 500 of whom work with the Scoobies... which now, of course, looks more like an organized Slayers squad than a group of teenagers trying to get by. Ethan Rayne, Amy Madison and Warren Mears (who ended up like a skinless chicken after pissing off DarkWillow on Season 6) make an impact here.

The second arc begins with the arrival of Faith on No Future for You (006-009), in which Faith gets a mysterious assignment from Giles, and finds a rogue Slayer who's trying to kill Buffy. Upon the reevaluation of her own dark path (with even an appearance from the Mayor), Faith decides to help other slayers who might be lost.

Followed later by Wolves at the Gate (012-015), in which we find new possible relationships, and loss after a group of werewolves that can turn into fog and morph back to normal steal the Scythe. We also get to go to Tokyo, and plenty of Dracula to see. After a hard battle with the mighty foggy morphing werewolves, Buffy finds herself traveling to the future in a crossover issue with Whedon's Fray in Time of Your Life (016-019).

The fifth arc of the series (Predators and Prey) begun last month with issue #021 Harmonic Divergence, an issue that brought back sunny-Californian-vampire Harmony Kendall back looking for a big break on the world of MTV's reality television. With special appearances of Andy Dick and CNN's Silver Fox, Anderson Cooper interviewing none other than Harmony, and posing a very interesting question - "They say they're our protectors, as fighters in some grand battle against 'evil,' but who decides what is evil? And, some are asking who protect us from them?"

What is right and what is wrong has suddenly changed... and now Buffy and the others seem to be the bad guys.

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