

20 Feet From Stardom

Dir: Morgan Neville **USA** **2013** **90 mins** **Cert: 12A**
Language: English
Available to programme from: September
Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=exiAQ9H54nE>

Veteran filmmaker Morgan Neville does, and his new film tracks the astounding careers, contributions, and sacrifices of pop music's most recognizable yet least known artists—the backup singers. Twenty Feet from Stardom focuses primarily on four singers — Darlene Love, Merry Clayton, Lisa Fischer, and Judith Hill — charting the rise of the modern pop vocal sound from its origins in the gospel tradition, through the demand for new, more impassioned sounds during the turbulent '60s, and into their declining options in the modern recording era.

Twenty Feet from Stardom boasts a wealth of celebrity interviews, including Bruce Springsteen, Stevie Wonder, Mick Jagger, and others. But this time the superstars take a backseat to the backup singers, recalling some of these ladies' most legendary recording sessions. Trust us—you'll never hear "Gimme Shelter" the same way once you've seen Jagger and Clayton describe the night she sang that song. - *Sundance Film Festival 2013*

Before the Winter Chill

Avant L'Hiver

Dir: Philippe Claudel **France** **2013** **103 mins** **Cert: CLUB**
Starring: Daniel Auteuil, Kristin Scott-Thomas, Leila Bekhti, Richard Berry
Language: French
Available to programme from: October
Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjLwYKyqgYg>

They are the perfect French haute bourgeois couple. Paul (Daniel Auteuil) is a respected surgeon; Lucie (Kristin Scott Thomas) cooks and gardens exquisitely. Together, they bring joy and a sense of stability to their extended family and community of friends. But the passion for Paul of a stranger (Leïla Bekhti) brings chaos into their well-manicured existence.

Novelist/film-maker Philippe Claudel's second film opens as a skilful, unnerving Gallic take on Fatal Attraction, with a nod to the great Claude Chabrol's thrillers, but it is far too smart to follow those well-worn tracks, gradually morphing into something more disconcertingly original and passionate. Claudel extends the strong creative partnership he began with Scott Thomas in I've Loved You So Long (JDIFF 2010) and extracts a superb, poignant performance from Auteuil, as he offers an unforgettable glimpse at the skeleton beneath the elegant skin of suburban gentility. - *Telluride Film Festival 2013*

Blue Jasmine

Dir: Woody Allen **USA** **2013** **98 mins** **Cert: 15A**
Starring: Cate Blanchett, Alec Baldwin, Sally Hawkins, Bobby Cannavale, Andrew Dice Clay
Language: English
Available to programme from: Now
Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3UBv1S4Ajfs>

Cate Blanchett carries off a magnificently watchable lead performance as Jasmine, the self-deluding socialite fallen on hard times – and there are superbly judged supporting roles for (among others) Alec Baldwin, Sally Hawkins, Michael Stuhlbarg, Peter Sarsgaard and Bobby Cannavale. The mix is just right: a bittersweet cocktail exactly measured. It is delivered with such ease and storytelling skill in the disposition of scenes and management of tone, and the elements of melodrama and soap are carefully controlled to give the right champagne fizz.

Without ever playing anything overtly for laughs, Allen gets a tingle of exquisitely sad comedy to run right through his picture from first to last. *Blue Jasmine* is an elegant, witty and sophisticated tale that reaches back into the American literary traditions of Edith Wharton and F Scott Fitzgerald, but also Allen's own magnificent tradition of compassionate human comedy. It is pure movie-going pleasure. - *Peter Bradshaw, The Guardian*

Calvary

Dir: John Michael McDonagh **Ireland** **2013** **100 mins** **Cert: 15A**
Starring: Brendan Gleeson, Kelly Reilly, Domhnall Gleeson, Chris O'Dowd, Dylan Moran, Aidan Gillen
Language: English
Available to programme from: September
Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Ull6wJzOpc>

Set against the magnificent Sligo landscape, John Michael McDonagh's second feature shares a leading man and a similar dark sense of humour with his debut, the hugely successful *The Guard*. But this new film is a complex tale with many tones and textures, at once a Dostoyevskian morality fable; a dissection of contemporary Irish society, a murder mystery (from the point of view of the victim) and a fascinating character study with a towering, career-best performance by Brendan Gleeson.

Father James Lavelle (Gleeson) is the priest in a small Sligo parish. One day, while hearing confession, he is told that he is going to be murdered ... in one week. It's a week in which Father James struggles to understand his death sentence as the day draws near, searching for hope and faith amongst his motley collection of parishioners – a community of lost souls and, it seems, potential murder suspects.

Calvary is a complex and challenging work, part philosophical treatise, part murder mystery, with a fiercely black vein of humour lacing all the elements together. A stunning turn by Gleeson leads a wealth of Irish talent including Chris O'Dowd, Dylan Moran, Kelly Reilly and Pat Shortt. Shot by award-winning cinematographer Larry Smith (*Only God Forgives*), and featuring a score by Mayo-born composer Patrick Cassidy, *Calvary* is a work of savage ferocity and a wonder to behold. - *Gráinne Humphreys, Jameson Dublin International Film Festival 2014*

Double, The

Richard Ayoade **UK** **2014** **92 mins** **Cert: 16**
Starring: Jesse Eisenberg, Mia Wasikowska, Wallace Shawn, Noah Taylor
Language: English
Available to programme from: September
Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_kICoDTHKGg

This is a moody, gloomy comedy - a taut study of self-identity that comes up with no easy answers. *Submarine* director Richard Ayoade's second film lays Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novella out in a nowhere land of office bureaucracy. Jesse Eisenberg plays Simon James, a skivvyng worker bee who's belittled by his colleagues and shunned by Hannah (Mia Wasikowska) the elfin girl who works the office's giant, clanking photocopier. Eisenberg also plays James Simon, Simon James' doppelgänger, who arrives unannounced, wins over the boss and immediately starts dating Hannah. No-one reacts to the duplication, because Simon's such a nobody. You don't know it's a copy if you haven't seen the original.

The Double isn't an original idea. It wasn't even in Dostoyevsky's time. But it's a great story. And Ayoade has produced a brilliant copy. – *Henry Barnes, The Guardian*

Golden Dream, The*La Jaula de Oro*

Diego Quemada-Diez **2013** **Mexico, Spain** **102 mins** **Cert: CLUB**
Starring: Brandon Lopez, Rodolfo Dominguez, Karen Martinez, Carlos Chajon
Language: Spanish
Available to programme: October
Trailer: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bgp9g9NF_x0

The title comes from a Mexican ballad, *Jaula de Oro*, about the despair of those Mexicans who have actually made it into the US, but find it a "golden cage" because America accepts illegals' cheap labour – all the cooks and gardeners and office-cleaners – without allowing them the proper residency papers they need to rise beyond the faceless servant class. Despite this, the US is still a magnet for the poor of Latin America.

Quemada-Diez has found three excellent non-professional actors for his lead roles. Brandon López and Karen Martínez play Juan and Sara, two kids who are desperate to get out of Guatemala, along with a young Indian boy they meet, Chauk (Rodolfo Domínguez). With some US dollar bills sewn secretly into their jeans, they plan on hopping boxcars and riding the rails up through Mexico and then over the border into California, this last part requiring them to work their passage by volunteering as drug mules for the gangs running heroin through secret crossing points. At every stage, these vulnerable teenagers face danger and almost certain death from predatory criminals to whom their young lives are worth less than zero.

There is something very moving about the desperate courage shown by Juan, Sara and Chauk as they battle northwards. Sara has prudently decided to disguise herself as a boy called "Oswaldo" by cutting her hair, wearing a cap and taping up her chest under her shapeless T-shirt. It creates a poignant romantic tension and there is even a tender sort of Jules et Jim frisson between the three of them. But to those hoping for a relaxing or romantic outcome, *La Jaula de Oro* has nothing to offer but grim reality. It is a very substantial movie, with great compassion and urgency. - *Peter Bradshaw / The Guardian*

Winner - Un Certain Regard: A Certain Talent Prize for the ensemble, Cannes Film Festival 2013

Winner - Audience Award - Thessaloniki Film Festival 2013

Half of A Yellow Sun

Dir: Biyi Bandele **Nigeria, UK** **2013** **106 mins** **Cert: CLUB**
Starring: Chiwetel Ejiofor, Thandie Newton, Anika Noni Rose, Joseph Mawle, John Boyega, Genevieve Nnaji, Onyeka Onwenu
Language: English
Available to programme from: September
Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TDIyJjdNiyg>

Chiwetel Ejiofor (*12 Years A Slave*, *Children of Men*) and Thandie Newton (*Crash*, *The Pursuit of Happyness*) star in this epic chronicle of family ties and war from celebrated Nigerian playwright Biyi Bandele.

Celebrated playwright Biyi Bandele's directorial debut, an adaption of Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Orange Prize-winning novel, chronicles the captivating journey of two women during the tumult of Nigeria's independence and ensuing Nigerian-Biafran War (1967-1970), a conflict prompted by the attempted secession of Nigeria's southeastern region and its formation into the short-lived Republic of Biafra. With the vast sweep of an epic, *Half of a Yellow Sun* tells the story of a generation through the prism of the sisters' thorny romantic destinies: Olanna (Thandie Newton) falls in love with Odenigbo (Chiwetel Ejiofor, also at the

Festival in Steve McQueen's *12 Years a Slave*), a revolutionary who fathers a child by another woman, while Kainene (Anika Noni Rose) enters into a romance with a British writer (Joseph Mawle) who has come to Nigeria to teach.

Nigerian-born Bandele rose to prominence after his 1997 British stage version of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. His take on *Half of a Yellow Sun*, which streamlines and brings a charged cinematic energy to Adichie's sprawling text, is further evidence of his skill at literary adaptation. The novel's seamless translation to the screen is aided immeasurably by the film's cast: Ejiofor's bracingly charismatic turn as the intellectual militant; Onyeka Onwenu as his hardline mother; and Newton, whose subtle, knowing performance makes her the dramatic anchor in this tale of a country adrift in a sea of ethnic strife and male domination, yet longing for self-determination.

While its historical scope looks fifty years into the past, *Half of a Yellow Sun* is a chilling, lucid, and emotionally gripping drama from contemporary Nigerian cinema, and a film that honours the fearless intelligence and strength of the country's women. - *Rasha Salti, Toronto International Film Festival 2013*

Ilo Ilo

Anthony Chen	2013	Singapore	99 mins	Cert: 12A
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Starring: Angeli Bayani, Yeo Yann Yann, Chen Tianwen, Koh Jia Ler

Language: Mandarin

Available to programme: October

Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BkNHIdEou7o&list=PL71FE2304406A75EA>

Anthony Chen's *Ilo Ilo* is a richly humane, consistently absorbing independent film from Singapore. Winner of the prestigious Camera d'Or prize for best first film at the 2013 Cannes Film Festival, it glows with warmth, humour, and compassion.

Lim Jiale is a very naughty ten-year-old in 1990s Singapore. He's quite intelligent, though given to fits of violent temper and alarmingly antisocial behaviour. His parents are typically struggling middle-class Chinese-speaking Singaporeans who seem on the verge of slipping out of their middle-class status. Jiale's father, sweet but rather weak and ineffectual, loses his sales job, and lacks the courage to tell his family. Jiale's mother, Leng, is pregnant: she's relatively tough and capable, though the shipping company she works for is also downsizing. To help handle Jiale, the Lims hire a Filipina maid, Terry (Angeli Bayani, extraordinary). Terry is savvy, incredibly patient, and has an underlying gentleness and steeliness that helps her bond with Jiale. With Jenny's arrival, family dynamics begin to quietly shift, as inner strengths and weaknesses reveal themselves.

Chen manages to weave subtle observations about economic downsizing, class dynamics and the exploitation of foreign labour into this compelling and very emotionally involving family story. But he does it with a graceful hand. The film never preaches: it offers fully rounded, often surprising characters, eliciting our wonder and understanding. - Shelly Kraicer / Vancouver International Film Festival 2013

Winner - Camera D'Or, Best First Feature, Cannes Film Festival 2013

Leviathan

Dir: V  rena Paravel, Lucien Castaing-Taylor **France, UK, USA 2012** **87 mins**

Cert: CLUB

Language: No dialogue

Available to programme from: May

Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2wNiJt-l6U>

There are moments in *Leviathan* so breathtaking that it's easy to forget they're also familiar. Documentarians V  rena Paravel and Lucien Castain-Taylor follow a pair of fishing vessels off the coast of Massachusetts from nearly every imaginable angle as well as a few impossible ones: Captured on small digital cameras fixed to fishermen helmets, tossed beneath the waves and strewn across the deck among the dead-eyed haul, the barrage of visuals populating *Leviathan* contain a routinely dissociative effect. The dialogue is sparse and distant, drowned out by hulking machinery, wind and water. The movie could take place on another planet; instead, it peers at this one from a jarring and entirely fresh point of view.

Leviathan resembles nothing like the existing format for nature documentaries, but it does point to a different approach to it. Generally speaking, the genre is predicated on distance between the viewer and subject. *Leviathan*, on the other hand, delves into the thick of it, the camera merging with subjects living and dead, fashioning the natural world into the ultimate expressionistic accomplishment.

Without rescinding its atmosphere, *Leviathan* finally brings up its credits, which contain a tribute to vessels lost off the Bedford Coast. Even then, however, it avoids hitting an elegiac note. While ominous, the movie maintains a life-affirming message, celebrating an ancient ritual by plummeting its lyrical depths and staying there. - *Indiewire*

Winner - Don Quixote Award Special Mention, Locarno International Film Festival 2012

Winner - FIPRESCI Award, Locarno International Film Festival 2012

Winner - Michael Powell Award for Best British Feature, Edinburgh Film Festival 2013

Metro Manila

Dir: Sean Ellis **Philippines** **2013** **115 mins** **Cert:** CLUB

Starring: Jake Macapagal, John Arcilla, Althea Vega

Language: Tagalog

Available to programme from: May

Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=or50obXaUC8>

Seeking a brighter future in megacity Manila, Oscar Ramirez and his family flee their impoverished life in the rice fields of the northern Philippines. But the sweltering capital's bustling intensity quickly overwhelms them, and they fall prey to the rampant manipulations of its hardened locals. Oscar catches a lucky break when he's offered steady work for an armored truck company and gregarious senior officer Ong takes him under his wing. Soon, though, the reality of his work's mortality rate and the murky motives of his new partner force Oscar to confront the perils he faces in his new job and life.

Director Sean Ellis's return (*The Broken* premiered at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival) vividly captures the desperation of life amongst the squalid Manila slums, then ratchets up the tension, creating an intense thriller with a poignant humanity and palpable dramatic stakes. In the role of Oscar, Jake Macapagal brings emotional depth to the wrenching choices he must make to sustain his family. - *Sundance Film Festival 2013*

Winner - Audience Award, Sundance Film Festival 2013

Mood Indigo*L'écume des jours***Dir: Michel Gondry****2013****France****94 mins****Cert: 12A****Starring: Audrey Tautou, Romain Duris, Gad Elmaleh, Omar Sy, Aïssa Maïga, Charlotte Le Bon****Language: French****Available to programme: October****Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezPQBlaQsvo>**

It's a match made in heaven: director Michel Gondry, master of cinematic bricolage, meets Boris Vian's cult novel *Froth on the Daydream*, and the result is *Mood Indigo*. Romain Duris plays handsome, wealthy Colin, who lives in a lovely apartment with a factotum (Omar Sy from *The Untouchables*) so brilliant and accomplished he leaves Jeeves at the starting post. Colin's friend Chick, avid collector of the books of celebrity philosopher Jean Sol Patre, falls in love, so Colin decides that he too wants a girlfriend, which is when he meets Chloe (Audrey Tautou). So far, so cute. But there's heartbreak ahead.

Froth on the Daydream, first published in 1947, was described by Raymond Queneau as 'the most heartbreakingly poignant modern love story ever written'. Gondry's brand of dark romantic whimsy and penchant for lo-tech effects nail the writer's jazzy invention, surreal flights of fancy, streaks of satire and wall-to-wall puns. Like the novel, the film starts off light-hearted, but there are signs all is not rosy in this world. As the characters are confronted by worsening health and financial crises, the film becomes darker and more melancholy. *Mood Indigo* is a rom-com haunted by death. - Anne Billson / *The Telegraph*

Past, The*Le passé***Dir: Asghar Farhadi****Iran****2013****130 mins****Cert: 12A****Starring: Bérénice Bejo, Tahar Rahim, Ali Mosaffa, Pauline Burlet, Elyes Aguis, Jeanne Jestin****Language: French****Available to programme from: September****Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BveBLEPmxkU>**

Following the taut Oscar-winning divorce drama *A Separation*, Iranian director Asghar Farhadi returns with another stunning study of modern family life, this time set on the outskirts of Paris where Ahmad (Ali Mosaffa) arrives from Tehran to finalise the end of his tempestuous marriage to estranged wife Marie (Bérénice Bejo).

The Past, however, is not simply a variation on a theme; it is a gripping, emotional detective story, as curious Ahmad investigates the events of the previous four years, his interest piqued by Marie's sulky teenage daughter Lucie (Pauline Burlet), whose strange contempt for her mother's new boyfriend Samir (Tahar Rahim) sets the story in motion.

Farhadi's cast is note-perfect, especially *The Artist*'s Bejo, playing beautifully against type as a flaky suburban mother of three. But the real star is the script, a masterwork of restraint that drip-feeds one explosive revelation after another. - Damon Wise, *BFI London Film Festival*

Winner - Best Actress, Cannes Film Festival 2013

Pioneer

Dir: Erik Skjoldbjærg **Norway** **3013** **106 mins** **Cert: CLUB**
Starring: Aksel Hennie, Wes Bentley, Stephen Lang, Stephanie Sigman, Andre Eriksen
Language: Norwegian, English
Available to programme from: September
Trailer: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWh6yaRwh_U

Director Erik Skjoldbjærg's suspenseful thriller begins as Petter and Knut, brothers and two of Norway's best professional divers, are training to dive a death-defying 500 metres below the surface of the Black Sea. It's the early eighties, and oil and natural gas reserves worth millions have been discovered off the shores of Norway. Working as part of a joint Norwegian-US effort for a multinational corporation, the two men risk everything to reach the ocean floor and the untapped natural resources. When their first mission ends in tragedy, Petter must uncover what really happened and why.

Sixteen years ago, Skjoldbjærg made his directorial debut with the contemporary thriller classic *Insomnia* (later remade by Christopher Nolan), and his return to the genre is a wonderfully tense work with ever-rising stakes. Boasting an atmospheric soundtrack by AIR and a superb lead performance by Aksel Hennie, one of Norway's biggest stars, *Pioneer* is a gripping tale of determination, avarice and paranoia in the deep sea.

- *Philadelphia Film Festival 2013*

Robber, The

Der Räuber

Dir: Benjamin Heisenberg **Austria, Germany** **2010** **97 mins** **Cert: CLUB**
Starring: Andreas Lust, Franziska Weisz, Florian Wotruba
Language: German
Available to programme from: September
Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JlupR5Zplw8>

Laconic and ultra-realistic in style, Benjamin Heisenberg's (Sleeper) latest drama is based on the true story of one Johannes Rettenberger, a bank robber in 1980's Vienna with the nickname Pumpgun Ronnie because of the Ronald Reagan mask he sported while committing his crimes.

In jail he took up running and when he got out he alternated between his newfound passion for marathons and his old-time love for robbing banks, trying and failing to substitute the endorphin high he got from the former for the kicks he took from the latter. Andreas Lust immerses himself in the character of Rettenberger, giving him a chilling and implacable need that can never be fulfilled.

"A truly remarkable film ... about men of violence running on empty... Heisenberg supplies no psychology or motivation. Perhaps Johannes runs because the world around him and the pettiness of its inhabitants disgust him. Perhaps he's an anarchist without a cause. Perhaps he's just another instance of what happens from time to time in our money-go-round society - something snaps. Tellingly there's virtually no difference between Johannes' pale, unremarkable face and the mask he hides behind - it's as if he slips into an alter ego that is merely a more radical version of himself..."

Olaf Möller, Film Comment, Jameson Dublin International Film Festival 2011

Rocket, The

Dir: Kim Mordaunt **Laos, Australia** **2013** **96 mins** **Cert: CLUB**
Starring: Sitthiphon Disamoe, Loungnam Kaosainam, Thep Phongam, Bunsri Yindi, Sumrit Warin, Alice Kohavong
Language: Lao
Available to programme from: September
Trailer: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_kQcBeo8C90

The Rocket is a heartwarming coming-of-age tale set entirely in Laos. Kim Mordaunt, who made the excellent documentary *Bomb Harvest* (SFF 2007), which was also set in Laos, is clearly invested in the people and culture of the region, and tells this story with great empathy and authenticity.

Ahlo is the surviving twin of a difficult birth and is believed by some to be a source of bad luck. When the 10-year-old Ahlo and his family are displaced by the construction of a dam, further tragedy strikes as they relocate. Upon reaching the relocation village, Ahlo befriends young Kia and her eccentric uncle Purple, but is still ostracised by the superstitious community, and even treated with suspicion by his own family. Ahlo decides that his only hope of redemption is the Rocket Festival: a riotous, and dangerous, annual competition where huge bamboo rockets are set off to provoke the rain gods. Despite being too young to enter the competition, Ahlo is determined to succeed.

Set amidst a beautiful landscape, and with lovely performances by the young actors, *The Rocket* is a sensitive and uplifting film. - *Sydney International Film Festival 2013*

Winner - Best Debut Film, Berlin International Film Festival 2013

Winner – Best Debut Film, Jameson Dublin International Film Festival 2014

Run & Jump

Dir: Steph Green **Ireland** **2013** **102 mins** **Cert: 15A**
Starring: Maxine Peake, Will Forte, Edward MacLiam, Sharon Horgan
Language: English
Available to programme from: September
Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zO2H34EnnAQ>

After a stroke leaves her husband mentally disabled and fundamentally changed, spirited Irish housewife Vanetia struggles to keep her family together in the wake of tragedy. A research grant from American doctor Ted Fielding, interested in documenting the family's recovery process, allows them to get by. Though Vanetia initially resents living under Ted's microscope, she soon finds comfort in his calming presence, while Ted responds to Vanetia's dynamic, unpredictable personality. As the two explore their bond within their unique situation, a new family begins to emerge.

Directed by Academy Award®-nominee Steph Green and featuring *Saturday Night Live* star Will Forte in an impressive dramatic debut, this life-affirming film embraces the healing power of love and family in all of its idiosyncratic forms. *Run and Jump* is an unexpected, unconventional romance, intimate family portrait and emotional journey of recovery that ultimately uplifts through its heartfelt message of human connection and the power of acceptance. - *Cara Cusumano, Tribeca Film Festival 2013*

Winner - Audience Award, Galway Film Fleadh, 2013

Thousand Times Goodnight, A*Tusen ganger god natt***Dir: Erik Poppe 2013 Norway, Ireland, Sweden 111 mins Cert: 12A****Starring: Juliette Binoche, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Lauryn Canny, Maria Doyle Kennedy, Larry Mullen Jr., Mireille Darc, Adrianna Cramer Curtis, Mads Ousdal****Language: English****Available to programme: October****Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y98z8tkpNe8>**

Erik Poppe's *A Thousand Times Goodnight* examines the choice between family and career when that career represents work of real social importance. A standing ovation greeted Montreal's world premiere of the film, which went on to earn the jury's Special Grand Prix. Stateside, its art house appeal is strong, with Juliette Binoche's complex performance deserving particular attention.

Binoche plays Rebecca, a photojournalist whose work in conflict zones has made her (as one of the film's rare bits of too-on-the-nose dialogue puts it) "one of the top five photographers out there." We meet her in a transfixing opening sequence that establishes both the thorny ethical questions inherent in the character's life and the way being good at her job is tied to being bad at self-preservation: Having made contacts within a Kabul-based militant group, she is allowed to document the haunting ceremony in which a woman makes herself spiritually ready for a suicide attack. Insisting on traveling with the bomber partway to her target, she winds up in the blast zone and is badly wounded. Rebecca is sent home to Dublin, where she's welcomed by two charming daughters and husband, Marcus (Nikolaj Coster-Waldau). When Marcus says he can no longer live with a woman whose career leaves him and the girls waiting for The Call, Rebecca decides to quit working in danger zones.

Poppe and Eeg ignore the most obvious argument suggested by Rebecca's dilemma. - *John DeFore / Hollywood Reporter*

Tom at The Farm*Tom à la ferme***Dir: Xavier Dolan Canada 2013 103 mins Cert: CLUB****Starring: Xavier Dolan, Pierre-Yves Cardinal, Lise Roy, Evelyne Brochu, Manuel Tadros, Jacques Lavalée, Anne Caron, Olivier Morin****Language: French****Available to programme from: October****Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLOJpY6DfAE>**

A kinky queer noir detailing the dangers awaiting a gay Montreal hipster (Dolan) as he journeys to the homophobic heartland for his lover's funeral, it's an improbably exciting match of knife-edge storytelling and a florid vintage aesthetic best represented by Gabriel Yared's glorious orchestral score.

Opening with a swooning French-language rendition of Michel Legrand's "The Windmills of Your Mind" and closing with Rufus Wainwright's anguished escape anthem "Going to a Town," the film could as easily have cribbed a lyric from Blur's "Coffee & TV": "Do you go to the country / It isn't very far / There're people there who will hurt you / Because of who you are." That's exactly what Tom (a bottle-blond Dolan) learns when he heads to Quebec's rural flatlands to bury his 25-year-old lover, Guillaume.

The film looks as gorgeous as it sounds, with Andre Turpin's rich, crisply composed lensing effectively playing the landscape's bleak, affectless minimalism against its deep autumnal coloring. Working, as ever, as his own costume designer, Dolan makes even mud-splattered workwear look a tiny bit fabulous. - *Guy Lodge, Variety*

Winner - FIPRESCI Award, Venice Film Festival 2013

Venus in Fur*La Vénus à la fourrure***Dir: Roman Polanski 2013 France 95 mins Cert: 15A****Starring: Emmanuelle Seigner, Mathieu Amalric****Language: French****Available to programme: October****Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9x6ffH188E>**

As with his earlier *Carnage* and *Death and the Maiden*, *Venus in Fur* finds Roman Polanski transferring a New York stage hit to the screen with maximum fidelity and facility, and a minimum of fuss. Primarily a vehicle for Mrs. Polanski, Emmanuelle Seigner, who engulfs the screen with a juicy comic performance that does full justice to a demanding role, this playful and literate rumination on the fine line between passion and perversity, pleasure and pain, life and art should draw the attention of discerning highbrow audiences.

In its original Off Broadway production at the Classic Stage Company, *Venus in Fur* worked up a feverish intensity, thanks to its close-quarters, in-the-round staging and the galvanizing performance of newcomer Nina Arianda, who seemed, much like her character, to have materialized out of the blue. For the movie, Polanski, always a master of claustrophobic spaces, has opened the play up ever so slightly, shooting in widescreen with usual cameraman Pawel Edelman and setting the action in a cavernous theater where the stage is dressed for a musical production of "Stagecoach" (complete with large, phallic cacti). If the resulting atmosphere is slightly less pressure-cooker, director and actors prove no less adept at capturing the play's tricky shifts in tone and perspective.

As on *Carnage*, composer Alexandre Desplat has provided a sparingly used but effective original score, including a haunting, carnivalesque main theme. - *Scott Foundas / Variety*

We Are The Best!*Vi är bäst!***Lukas Moodysson Sweden 2013 101 mins Cert: 15A****Starring: Mira Barkhammar, Mira Grosin, Liv LeMoyne, Johan Lijemark, Mattias Wiberg, Jonathan Salomonsson, Alvin Strollo, Anna Rydgren, Peter Eriksson, Charlie Falk, David Dencik, Lena Carlsson, Emrik Ekholm, Ann-Sofie Rase****Language: Swedish****Available to programme from: September****Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkyobYA4dD4>**

Three early-teen Stockholm girls form a punk band to thrash their way through outsider unease in Swedish writer-director Lukas Moodysson's latest. Smells like Swedish teen spirit. People keep telling 13-year-old friends Bobo (Mira Barkhammar) and Klara (Mira Grosin) that punk is dead. The tacky spectacle of their blonde nemeses in candy-colored spandex doing a school talent show routine to the synthpop of Human League's "Don't You Want Me" would seem to confirm it. Funny and frank in its observations, the film is a delightful snapshot of female friendship at that age, from the giddy highs to the melancholy funks, from the sustaining bonds to the jealousies and stinging betrayals.

The three young leads turn in winning performances, creating nicely individualized characters and revealing a lot in moments of quiet sensitivity. Nimble camerawork, brisk editing, and production design that's colorful but at the same time understated help wrap up the package, of course along with a raucous soundtrack selection of Scandi punk tunes. - *David Rooney, Hollywood Reporter*

Winner - Grand Prix, Tokyo International Film Festival 2013