

RIDICULE 07 October 1998

France Dir: Patrice Leconte 1996 103 mins Cert 15
A period drama set amongst the aristocracy of 18th Century France in the court of Louis XVI. An impoverished nobleman goes to the King in the hope of raising money for a rural sewerage system. To do so he must out-maneuvre the courtiers that surround His Majesty. However he is sucked into the superficial mind games and strutting world of the rich and corrupt. Leconte's direction is subtle, cynical and clever. As you would expect the elegant costumes make Ridicule visually sumptuous.

CAREER GIRLS 21 October ^{3rd}

UK Dir: Mike Leigh 1997 87 mins Cert 15
Annie (Lynda Steadman) reconnects with an old college friend, Hannah (Katrin Cartidge), whom she has not seen since leaving university. They spend a weekend together during which Annie recalls her student days, portrayed by a series of flashbacks. During their reunion they encounter faces from the past, and discover that despite their successful careers, they are still carrying a lot of emotional baggage around. At first glance the characters are dysfunctional but as the weekend unfolds, you discover the two women and their past. Often amusing and occasionally moving.

SPIRIT OF THE BEEHIVE 04 November ^{Bottom}

(El Espiritu de la Colmena)
Spain Dir: Victor Erice 1973 98 mins
Set in rural Spain soon after Franco's victory. Ana, a lonely village girl, goes to the town hall to see Boris Karloff's Frankenstein. She becomes entranced with the creature. When her sister convinces Ana that the monster really exists, she sets off into the countryside to find him. Haunting visual imagery and sound contrast, the industriousness of the working bee with the stagnation of rustic society.

MICHAEL COLLINS 18 November

USA Dir: Neil Jordan 1996 132 mins Cert 15
Neil Jordan presents this historical tale of the 1920 political activist and member of the Irish Republican Army - Michael Collins. Liam Neeson plays Collins whose rise from terrorism on the streets to leadership and assassination is passionately charted here. The film deals with the IRA of the 20's and the troubles of the time.

TWENTYFOURSEVEN 02 December

UK Dir: Shane Meadows 1997 96 mins Cert 15
24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Filmed emotively in black and white and full of beautiful landscapes and visual imagery. An evocative sound track accompanies the story. Our Hero is Darcy (Bob Hoskins at his best), a flawed modern day saint, who is found by a young man as an incoherent, dishevelled tramp in a railway wagon. What leads him there and why is the lad so willing to help the vagrant? A well crafted, witty and optimistic, if occasionally, bleak view of inner city life.

AS GOOD AS IT GETS 16 December ^{1st}

USA Dir: James L Brooks 1997 138 mins Cert 15
Helen Hunt and Jack Nicholson both won Oscars for their performances in this irreverent comedy drama. Melvyn Udall (Nicholson) is a dysfunctional and altogether obnoxious individual trapped in a life of solitude by a compulsive-obsessive disorder. Carol (Hunt) is the gutsy, independent waitress he falls for. But Melvyn must learn some lessons in humanity if he hopes for a relationship and the grudging act of minding a neighbour's dog is his first step. The result is a film which is both funny, touching, and at times, rather politically incorrect.

MA VIE EN ROSE 06 January 1999

France Dir: Alain Berliner 1997 85 mins Cert 12
My Life as a Rose concerns Ludovic, a young boy who appears at his parents' house warming party dressed as an oriental princess. Prudery and bigotry raise their ugly faces against Ludovic's family as the boy's transvestitism inspires a hate campaign against them. Ludovic is confident of his identity as a girl but desperately tries to suppress his instincts in the face of hostility towards his desires. This colourful, comic satire is a commentary on society's reaction to exceptions to the norm.

THE SWEET HEREAFTER 20 January

Canada Dir: Atom Egoyan 1997 110 mins Cert 15
A small community is torn apart by a tragic accident which kills most of the town's children. A lawyer (Ian Holm) visits the victims' parents in order to profit from the tragedy by stirring up their anger and launching a class action suit against anyone they can blame. The community is paralysed by its anger, all but for one young girl (Sarah Polley), left in a wheelchair after the accident who finds the courage to lead

L.A. CONFIDENTIAL 03 February

USA Dir: Curtis Hanson 1997 135 mins Cert 18
This James Ellroy Novel turned to film, concerns crooked cops and devious dealings set in 1950's LA. The brutal massacre in a burger bar starts a complicated and dangerous investigation by the few honest cops LA has left. Thereupon a tightly knitted plot unfolds to find the perpetrators of the crime and uncover the corruption thriving within the city's law enforcement agency. The film won a pair of Baftas and an Oscar for the Best-Adapted Screenplay. Starring Kevin Spacey, Russell Crowe, Guy Pierce and Kim Basinger who won an Oscar for her role.

BURNT BY THE SUN 17 February

France/Russia Dir: Nikita Mikhalkov 1994 146 mins Cert 15
Colonel Sergei Kotov, a hero of the revolution, is spending a few days on vacation, during the summer of 1936, in his wife Maroussia's datcha, in the country. He is content with his radiant young wife and beloved daughter. Into the scene comes Dimitri a former lover of his wife. Sergei knows that Dimitri works for the secret police but is more worried this handsome young man may re-awaken his wife's passions. Dimitri's agenda however is far more sinister. Burnt By The Sun won the Oscar for Best Foreign Language film in 1995.

CHASING AMY 03 March

USA Dir: Kevin Smith 1994 90 mins Cert 18
Holden (Ben Affleck) and Banky are best friends and creators of a popular comic called 'Bluntman and Chronic'. At a convention, Holden meets Alyssa, another comic book writer, and falls in love with her. However, he has a problem, for Alyssa is a lesbian. His infatuation puts a strain on his friendship with Banky, and Alyssa's history threatens to put a rift between them. This is a drama revolving around the relationships between the three protagonists. Director Kevin Smith's third and best film to date.

MARVIN'S ROOM 17 March

USA Dir: Jerry Zaks 1996 98 mins Cert PG
Estranged since their father's first stroke some 17 years earlier, Lee (Meryl Streep) and Bessie (Diane Keaton) lead separate lives in separate states. Lee's son, Hank (Leonardo Di Caprio), finds himself committed to a mental institution after setting fire to his mother's house. Marvin, the two women's bedridden father, has "been dying for the past twenty years." Bessie discovers that she has leukemia and will die without a bone marrow transplant.