



2009 Round-up

By Lisa Lipkin

The news isn't good. According to Sander van den Oord, a film programmer for Pathe Cinemas, Dutch women have the exact same tastes for superficiality as their American counterparts. Forget high brow art films or deep, meaningful dramas. No, it's muscled action heroes, shallow charmers, and sentimental chick flicks that have ensnared the hearts (and Euros) of movie going women across the Netherlands.

Apparently, the "you-complete-me syndrome" is very much alive among twenty-somethings in Holland. That's why the Pathe cinemas are banking on the release of several wedding films including *Bride Wars* (March), starring Anne Hathaway and Kate Hudson, in which two best friends become rivals when they schedule their respective weddings on the same day, and *Rachel Getting Married*, (April) a Jonathan Demme film, about the return of an estranged daughter to the family home for her sister's wedding.

Female graduates of the school of hard knocks will be satisfied by the Pathe's other offerings. *Motherhood*, (June), starring Uma Thurman and Minnie Driver is a biting indie comedy about the workaday life of a single mom and *The Rebound* (April), directed by [Bart Freundlich](#), centers around a mature single mother (Catherine Zeta-Jones) who captures the attentions of a much younger man.

If pure hunk is what you're after, *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* will fit the bill. Featuring sexy Clint Eastwood in a saddle, this classic spaghetti Western, directed by Sergio Leone, will be re-released in January. That same month, Tom Cruise and Kenneth Branagh spice up the big screen in *Valkyrie*, the much anticipated story about the real life attempt to assassinate Hitler during World War 2.

Still, no chick-flick round up would be complete paying deference to the age-old maxim, Shopping Makes Everything Alright. *Confessions of a Shopaholic*, (March) a comedy based on the book series by Sophie Kinsella, features a habitual shopper ([Isla Fisher](#)) who lands a job at a fashion magazine in order to accommodate her uncontrollable *consumeritis*. True to form, the clothes are fabulous, the guy that Fisher snags is seriously hot, and she learns some important life lessons along the way.

For more information about 2009 films, go online at <http://www.pathe.nl/>.

David Lean Centenary at the Film Museum. Amsterdam

By Lisa Lipkin

This Christmas, the Film Museum in Amsterdam is feeling a bit romantic. That's why they've chosen to spotlight four of the more sentimental films of British director David Lean, who would have turned 100 this year. Ironic, considering that Lean was a relentless womanizer whose infidelities led to six broken marriages and inspired his second wife, actress Kay Walsh, to say, "Being in love with David was a killer... how I survived I don't know."

It's dangerous to judge a director by his moral fiber, but it's awfully fun to view the contradictions between Lean's onscreen characters with his own. Lean, who had no impulse control where women were concerned, made *Brief Encounter* (1945), an unforgettable portrait of sexual frustration and unconsummated love between a middle-class housewife and a doctor, forced to meet at a railway station. During the making of *The Passionate Friends* (1948), Lean began an affair with his leading lady, Ann Todd, who was to become his third wife. Although notoriously insensitive, Lean shows a surprising sympathy in the film towards Claude Rains' character, the jealous husband, who is terrified that his wife will leave him for her former sweetheart (Trevor Howard).

It's not our job to reconcile artists with their art, only to appreciate the gems that tumble out from within them. And gems these films are--made all the more beautiful by their recent restoration by The David Lean Film Restoration Project in celebration of the director's centenary. *Brief Encounter*, which is being re-released in theaters throughout the Netherlands under a partnership agreement with Granada International and the Film Museum, kicks off on December 16. *Dr Zhivago*, *A Passage to India*, *Passionate*

Friends, and *Blithe Spirit* will be shown at the Film Museum in Amsterdam throughout December.

For tickets and film info, contact Filmmuseum Vondelpark
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Joodsfilmfestival: *Boxers and Hollywood*, November 5-9, 2008
By Lisa Lipkin

Say “Jewish New Yorker” and the average filmgoer is likely to conjure up *Woody Allen*, not *Rocky*. But those of us who grew up in the Bronx and Brooklyn of the 40’s and 50’s remember a different kind of Jewish prototype—street savvy, immigrant poor, and desperate for economic advancement, even if it meant taking a few blows to the head. Between 1910 and 1940 there were 27 Jewish world-boxing champions at a time when the sport was second in popularity only to baseball.

This year’s Jewish Film Festival will celebrate the golden age of the American Jewish boxer in a program titled *Boxers and Hollywood* at Het Ketelhuis in Amsterdam, November 5-9.

Filmgoers need to be nimble-footed at Wednesday’s premier, lest they trip over the boxing ring set up in the middle of the lobby. For 15 Euros, you can sip free champagne while watching Dutch Jewish boxers spar, then hear celebrity sportscaster Fritz Barend introduce *Orthodox Stands*, a 2007 documentary about Brooklyn’s Dmitriy Salita, a 25-year-old Ukrainian immigrant who is a top professional boxer and a rigorously observant Jew. The fun continues on Saturday night with *His People*, a 1925 silent film, accompanied by David Kweksilber’s jazz orchestra and the documentary *Max Baer’s Left Right Hook*, (2006), introduced by a Dutch neuroscientist specializing in brain injuries.

For those who prefer to view muscled chests *out* of the ring, *Xaviera Hollander*, *The Happy Hooker: portrait of a sexual revolutionary* will have its European premiere at the festival. Xaviera Hollander will be present at the screenings on November 6 and 9. The festival also features a retrospective celebrating 60 years of Israeli film industry with classics as Ephraim Kishon’s *The Policeman* and the recent feel good movie *Noodle*.

For more information, go to www.joodsfilmfestival.nl. Tickets can be purchased at Cinema *Het Ketelhuis* Westergasfabriek Pazzanistraat 4 Amsterdam tel: 020 684 00 90 info@ketelhuis.nl .