

s f t w MOVIES

TOP 5 DVDs

- 1 The New Mutants
- 2 Tenet
- 3 Roald Dahl's The Witches

- 4 Jiu Jitsu
 - 5 The Blackout - Invasion Earth
- Officialcharts.com

PUNK, Parkinson's disease and piano are the unlikely narrative cornerstones of this sweet and big-hearted tale set in Dublin.

Chiara Viale's directorial debut introduces us to 25-year-old Adrian (Cillein McEvoy), a classical pianist who once played sellout venues and graced magazine covers, only for his world to fall apart after a diagnosis of Parkinson's.

With his condition compromising his playing and his future bleak, Adrian flees home and his overprotective mother (Paula McGillicuddy) to move in with three music-obsessed flatmates unaware of his past.

Will (Jack Fenton), David (Patrick O'Brien) and Jodie (Martina Babisova) love punk, and play together in their band The Cellmates.

Despite his initial resistance, Adrian's new friends draw him out of his shell as he swaps his suit jacket for a leather bomber, comes to



THE NEW MUSIC
(15) 83mins

★★

terms with his diagnosis and embraces life again.

This aspirational indie film has a heartfelt message but the script is hit-and-miss and while Adrian is a convincing and interesting character, those around him

too often fall flat. Jodie and Will are underdeveloped and deserve more.

But tunes are at this Irish toe-tapper's heart – and David Sangster's original score hits all the right notes.

● Streaming from Jan 18

THIS David Bowie biopic starts with the singer spinning around in a red 2001: A Space Odyssey-style spacesuit before waking up on an aeroplane.

But unfortunately, while Elton John biopic Rocketman was a blast, Stardust does not even get off the launchpad.

One big issue is that it does not contain a single Bowie song. What a missed opportunity.

You can just imagine Changes playing as Bowie transforms into Ziggy Stardust, or Rebel Rebel as he confounds convention by wearing a dress.

As we saw in Queen movie Bohemian Rhapsody, the trade-off in securing the rights to great music is a director has to accept the interference of the songs' owners.

Freed of such constraints, filmmaker Gabriel Range could have created a Bowie movie as experimental as



STARDUST
(15) 109mins

★★

the man himself. Instead, he opts for a neatly made buddy road trip across America in 1971.

We see Bowie (actor and singer Johnny Flynn) team up with publicist Ron Oberman (Glow's Marc Maron).

In between, there are flashbacks to the singer's schizophrenic brother and a clunking thesis about Bowie's split personality.

Absolute Beginners might have done a better job.

GRANT ROLLINGS

Dulcie Pearce ON THE SOFA WITH THE REMOTE

BLITHE SPIRIT
12A, 96mins

★★★

LIVE plays exited the stage during the pandemic but you can get your theatre fix with a new screen adaptation of Noel Coward's *Blithe Spirit*.

The comic play, which was made into a wonderful 1945 film starring Rex Harrison, tells the story of award-winning novelist Charles Condomine (Downton Abbey's Dan Stevens) suffering writer's block after years of critical success.

As he struggles to turn one of his works into a screenplay, second wife Ruth (Isa Fisher) is on the receiving end of his frustrations.

She confesses to a friend they have not been active "between the sheets" and Charles admits: "Big Ben has stopped chiming."

Twists and inconsistencies

These lines, delivered in clipped, plummy English accents, conjure up memories of Victoria Wood's Acorn Antiques sketches.

After being amusing for a couple of minutes, they soon become cringeworthy and frustrating.

Desperate for inspiration, Charles has an idea while watching spiritualist medium Madame Arcati (Judi Dench) and thinks that communicating with the beyond has dramatic potential.

But during a séance at his home, Arcati opens the door to the spirit of his first wife Elvira (Lesley Mann), who died seven years earlier in a horse-riding accident.

While Elvira haunts his every waking moment, Charles becomes



newly infatuated with his dead wife – especially when she cures his writer's block and helps him finish his screenplay.

But Elvira is not happy that Charles has moved on with Ruth, the daughter of the movie bigshot who hired Charles to pen that screenplay.

So the ghost decides to cause no end of mischief in the couple's home.

There are a few twists in this frantically paced film – as well as

many inconsistencies. Elvira's ghost can't touch Charles without her hand going through his face, yet she can play the piano and pick up objects.

Stevens and Fisher play their parts well but both are crying out for a better script.

Though Dame Judi is superb, of course, even her character gets lost in the chaos.

Overall, this famous stage play fluffs its line on screen.

● Out now on Sky Cinema

MOVIE NEWS

● RAMI MALEK, below, and Zoe Saldana have joined Christian Bale and Margot Robbie in director David O Russell's untitled picture.

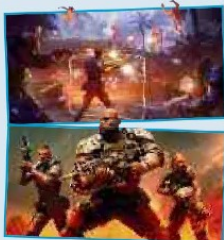
● Nicole Kidman and Javier Bardem are to star in *Being The Ricardos*, written and directed by Aaron Sorkin.

● Joe and Anthony Russo are plugging new film *Cherry*, starring Tom Holland, on Twitter.



GAMES

By STUART CULLEN



GEARS fans had to wait a while for something more than multiplayer updates.

But that's all changed because The Coalition has dished up the *Hivebuster* DLC which sees the action move away from the series' staple heroes and onto a new, well...newish team.

Don't expect an epic tale – this is a very short, sharp burst of what makes *Gears* good. It clocks in at just under three hours to complete.

The popcorn-fuelled blockbuster sees you battle through new locations and some epic set-pieces as one of the

Gears 5: Hivebusters

Xbox One, Xbox Series X/S and PC £14.99

Scorpio squad – a rag-tag band including Keegan, mystic-loving Lahni and the series' Scots hothead Mac.

Bizarrely, Mac is voiced by Canadian Trevor Devall and he just about gets away with it.

Fans will know these characters from the *Gears* 5 spin-off mode *Escape*, but they get fleshed out between active reloads and countless explosions.

The gameplay is pure

Gears 5 – you battle the swarm from one beautiful location to the next and there is always a more intense firefight on the way so nothing outlives its welcome.

Sadly, a lot of the arsenal and enemies stick to those set up by the core game so don't expect any new toys or big baddies. The light RPG side has been mixed up. The bot bud has been replaced by each member getting a skill that can be upgraded by finding special tokens. We liked Keegan's ammo drop. This is a great return for the series but it's too short.

★★★★

NEW MUSIC

By JIM GELLATLY

A B

WHERE: Glasgow.

FOR FANS OF: Juice WRLD, AJ Tracey, Craig David.

JIM SAYS: Having supported Jay-Z and caught the attention of Kanye West's label, A B is ready to emerge from the R&B underground.

Real name Abdul Oun, the Libyan-born rapper moved to Scotland in his teens. His passion for rhyme was amplified while in second year at Coatbridge High School.

He said: "I loved poetry and started writing poems to a girl I liked. I suffered from childhood-onset fluency disorder which made it very hard for me to speak a full sentence. Not good when you are trying to impress a girl."

He added: "We had a karaoke day, and it was probably the only time other pupils cheered for



me. It felt good." A B released his first mixtape at 17. That led to a deal with a local label and the chance to open for Jay-Z in Glasgow and Aberdeen.

He left the label after a year to pursue a career arranging events with acts such as Jason Derulo and Drake. He said: "The next eight years I was living in the fast lane."

A B returned to recording his own music with the freestyle track *Duney*, released at the end of 2019. His track *Right Now* then led to advice from the Kanye West-founded G.O.O.D. Music label.

Meanwhile A B continues to work on new tracks, most recently *One Day* and *2020*. He added: "I've managed to build a scene around me."

MORE: [instagram.com/abofficialgla](https://www.instagram.com/abofficialgla)

● Jim presents a weekly showcase of New Music on Amazing Radio, Sundays at 2-4pm. [amazingradio.com/jimgellatly.com](https://www.amazingradio.com/jimgellatly.com)

BOOKS

Edited by NATASHA HARDING

THE COFFIN MAKER'S GARDEN
Shunt MacBride, £18.99

PICK OF THE WEEK
AS Gordon Smith's home crumbles into the sea during a huge storm, human remains buried in his garden are exposed.

Photos rescued from his wrecked house reveal him as a serial killer who enjoys torturing victims.

A magnetic mix of creepy places, dark humour, horror and violence.

★★★★
BILL TODD

