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MOVIES

TOP 5 FILMS

1. Fast & Furious 9
2. Peter Rabbit 2
3. In The Heights

4. A Quiet Place Part II
5. Cruella

bfi.org.uk

LIKE a real-life incarnation of Ed Sheeran's Galway Girl, she played the fiddle in an Irish band... except this time she fell in love with an American man.

Borrowing heavily from the plot of Notting Hill and set in the Emerald Isle, this "first love" tale is twee, predictable and surprisingly sweet.

Rose Reid plays Finley, a young American violinist who flies to Ireland to study for a semester abroad.

On the plane from New York she sits next to movie star Beckett (Jedidiah Goodacre) who it later transpires is also staying at the same bed and breakfast run by Finley's host family.

Romance bubbles away, until A-lister Beckett has to choose between dating someone "normal" and his career-boosting fake relationship with co-star Taylor (Katherine McNamara).

There are glorious shots of pastoral Ireland, oblige-



FIDDLING... Rose Reid

FINDING YOU

(PG), 115mins

★★★★

tory fiddle-de-dee "craic" in the pub, lovable drunk rogues aplenty, and Vanessa Redgrave as a grumpy old lady.

Saoirse-Monica Jackson (Erin from Derry Girls) provides most of the laughs as starstruck Beckett fan

Emma. It's far too long, and so clichéd it's a surprise there are no leprechauns, but decent acting and sharp humour mean it slips down as smoothly as a Guinness.

●On Sky Cinema from tomorrow.

MARTIN Eden feels like a classic Italian film from the Seventies, unearthed after decades of gathering dust in all its Technicolor glory to help get bumps on cinema seats post-lockdown.

But I can confirm this is a new adaptation of the 1909 novel by American author Jack London about a young, uneducated sailor with big dreams of becoming a well-respected writer.

It is set in Naples against murmurings of socialist revolution, which could be from any patch of Italian history over the past century.

There's Gatsby-era fashion, Seventies cars and a soundtrack pulsing with Euro pop. This is a deliberate move by director Pietro Marcello to prove his story about love, determination and class struggles is timeless and for any era.

Martin (Luca Marinelli, from Netflix's The Old Guard) wakes up after a bender to see a defenceless young



LOVE... Luca and Jessica

MARTIN EDEN

(15), 129mins

★★★★

man being bullied and, one punch later, saves the lad.

His name is Arturo (Gius-tiniano Alpi) and he takes our hero to meet his family, the Orsinis. Here, Martin meets the beautiful Elena (Jessica Cressy) and all his

hopes, troubles and opportunities burst into life.

"This has been the best day of my life," Martin says to Elena. You believe him. It's Martin against the world and his struggles and tiny triumphs are glorious to see.

Dulcie Pearce

AT THE MOVIES

TRUFFLES are described as being a little nutty, deep, sweet and very rare.

Which is exactly how I'd describe this documentary about the secret community of truffle hunters who jealously guard their knowledge of where the fungi is found.

The hunters are old Italian men who have spent their long lives clambering the mountains and forests to find the delicious and highly expensive food.

Their existence is otherworldly and off the grid – they use broken typewriters, eat from the fields and appear to have not a single mobile phone between them.

The four men focused on are aged between 60 and 85, and live in small rural villages in the Piedmont area of Italy.

Their entire existence is searching for truffles. During this quiet, idyllic documentary, directed by Michael Dweck and Gregory Kershaw, we also see their other obsession – the dogs that help them.

Sing to their dogs

Their relationship with their working dogs is a thing of beauty. They get their canine helpers blessed in church by an enthusiastic priest, light candles on a cake for their birthday, bathe with them and sing to them.

It may seem eccentric but it's also understandable. These dogs are their constant companions – and they trust them with their livelihoods.

One 88-year-old, Carlo, insists on going out at night while his wife, who is both concerned and furious, shouts through the village trying to find him and bring him back.

There are many touches of humour, like in one scene at a truffle auction where buyers queue for ages to walk by the strange-looking fungi and bend to smell it, making it appear like a religious ritual.



PAWS FOR THOUGHT... canines help men's quest

FILM OF THE WEEK

THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS

(12A), 84mins

★★★★

The directors spent three years getting to know their subjects and getting involved in their private world, and you can tell the truffle hunters are comfortable in front of the camera.

But they insist on taking their truffle-seeking skills to the grave.

During a dinner with a friend, a childless, wifeless 84-year-old is asked to pass on his secrets of where he hunts and how.

He refuses. "If you had a child, you'd tell them," the friend states. "No, I would not!" the man exclaims. And he means it.

The Truffle Hunters is slow but idyllic, with each shot looking like it could be framed and put on the wall of a photography exhibition. It really is a gem.

Truffle hunters a bunch of fun guys to watch

FILM NEWS

- ZACK SNYDER will direct sci-fi fantasy Rebel Moon for Netflix.
- A sequel to The Old Guard will start filming next year with Charlize Theron as the lead.
- Black Panther: Wakanda Forever has started shooting, with rumours British actor Daniel Kaluuya will star in it.

NEW MUSIC

By JIM GELLATLY

LOTOS

WHERE: Edinburgh/Glasgow. FOR FANS OF: Lauryn Hill, Lady Leshurr, Little Simz.

JIM SAYS: Rubbing shoulders with legends like Wu-Tang, Nas and Busta Rhymes, MC LOTOS was putting Scottish hip-hop on the map from an early age.

Under various guises she's been releasing music for nearly 20 years. Debuting at 13 in 2003, the Edinburgh-born rapper of Nigerian heritage continues to pioneer the sound in Scotland and beyond.

Hailed as the country's first female MC, she has paved the way for others – but it has not been an easy ride.

She explained: "Scottish rap was seen as a joke and we were not given any opportunity. When you look at our early music videos the amount of abuse is indescribable." Stepping away from



the scene she set her own agenda, collaborating with reggae, dub and ska artists.

She said: "It was incredible to be part of the reggae scene where talent was important."

LOTOS provides her with a clean slate and an element of anonymity, allowing the music to do the talking. It stands for Last Of The Old School and includes Kope and her elder brother Revelations.

With a full LOTOS album in the works, the Check Mate EP sets things up nicely. Merging many genres including dub and grime there is a strong social message. She added: "It is hugely influenced by drill and the current apologetic struggles of inner-city youth."

MORE: lastoftheoldschool.com
● Jim presents a showcase of New Music on Amazing Radio, Sundays 2-4pm.
amazingradio.com
jimgellatly.com

BOOKS

Edited by NATASHA HARDING

THE SERIAL KILLER'S WIFE

Alice Hunter, £7.99

PICK OF THE WEEK

BETH HARDCASTLE has the perfect life, it seems, with husband Tom and their daughter Poppy in the Cotswolds.

But detectives turn up to question Tom about the murder of a young woman and it's clear things aren't that rosy.

With her husband in custody, Beth knows she has to do what is necessary to look out for herself and Poppy.

This book hooks you in to the drama straight away and does not let you go, even on the last page. Brilliant.

★★★★★

JADE CRADDOCK



GAMES

By STUART CULLEN

EVERY epic journey starts with one small step and my gaming odyssey started 30 years ago with a bit of a lie.

I fibbed to my parents that all the kids in my class at school had Mega Drives so they buckled and got me a Master System II which had a built-in copy of Alex Kidd in Miracle World.

An obsession with gaming was born. The game has a very special place in my heart, so hearing that the Jankenteam were giving it the remake treatment made me all tremble.

The DX version is a ground-up remaster of the 8-bit 35-year-old title

Alex Kidd in Miracle World DX

Xbox One, Series X/S, PS4, PS5, Switch and PC £14.99

with all the modern bells and whistles and some new content.

The tale sees the evil Janken taking over Radaxian. Alex has to save the day while releasing villages that have been turned to stone and rescuing the Radaxian royals. It does a great job in framing the platforming action as you run, jump and punch your way across evermore challenging levels before facing off against the bosses in iconic rock, paper and scissors

fight before battling Janken. Alex has a few tricks – like finding fire power rings to blast bad guys or having a speedy bike and chopper – which varies the gameplay up a bit.

The core gameplay seems the same as before, despite the shiny new coat, so it's very floaty and you often have to be pixel-perfect with your attacks or you die. And dying three times means a

restart. That said, there is now an infinite lives mode which is good for those who find it all too tough.

The look is stunning and just how five-year-old me imagined the 8-bit world back in the day, bursting with colour, charm and character. And you can switch it back to the classic graphics.

This game may have been missed by many first time round – don't make the same mistake now.

★★★★★

