

# Cinema Guide

SHUSWAP FILM SOCIETY

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January - April 2010



21st Annual  
Shuswap International  
Film Festival  
Jan. 29 - Feb 6, 2010  
Watch For Details

SALMON ARM

*35th GREAT SEASON!*

# Shall We Kiss

(Un Baiser, S'il vous Plaît)

France ~ 102 Min

Rating  
PG

Subtitles

Sat. January 09, 7:30 pm

Following his charming film, *Change of Address*, writer-director Emmanuel Mouret also stars in his latest, ***Shall We Kiss***, a Woody Allen-esque version of a French romantic comedy.

Gabriele (Michael Cohen) and Emilie (Julie Gayet) are strangers when they have a chance encounter in Nantes. An attraction forms when their eyes meet; they have dinner, and when Gabriel moves as if to kiss Emilie, she appears willing but then pulls back. She says that a single kiss, however innocently intended, can change your life, and sets about to prove her point by telling Michael a story, set in Paris, which takes up the rest of the film, with occasional cuts back to Emilie and Gabriel. It is about her longtime best friends Judith (Virginie Ledoyen) and Nicolas (Mouret).

Nicolas confides in Judith that he lacks physical affection in his relationships with women, and after some discussion, he asks her if she herself would help



him out. Out of friendship, she agrees. They politely remove their clothes to make even more polite love. Ensuing complications have a quiet inevitability, though spiced with the unexpected.

***Shall We Kiss*** enters into a complex plot, involving deception, role-playing, Judith's husband, his new girlfriend and a twist. It also has grace, a languid charm, much elegance, and a soundtrack by Schubert and Tchaikovsky.

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*"The plot, when it winds up and unwinds, is ingenious."*  
rogerebert.com

# Broken Embraces

(Los Abrazos Rotos)

Spain ~ 128 Min

Rating  
14A

Subtitles

Sat. January 16, 7:30 pm

Special Presentation of 2009 Toronto International Film Festival

Pedro Almodovar's latest film, ***Broken Embraces*** features a dense labyrinthine narrative and some complex personal relationships. At the center of this film sits a blind screenwriter and former director who has abandoned his real name, Mateo Blanco, (Lluís Homar) for a pseudonym, Harry Caine, the first sign of the double life he leads. Harry's current reality conceals a fascinating past which Almodovar spends much of his film detailing.

The plot is propelled by the arrival of a brash young man, hot on the heels of news that the producer of Mateo's film *Girls and Suitcases* has died. The film had marked a defining period in Mateo's life, as both he and his producer had fallen madly in love with a girl who was cast in the project. The simmering Lena (Penelope Cruz) had turned both of their worlds inside out. She



became the love of Mateo's life while simultaneously leading a double life with the film's producer. But it is the young man on his doorstep that intrigues and troubles the now blind Harry.

Almodovar skillfully uncovers the secrets of everyone's various pasts in this steamy, scheming and romantic melodrama. His witty screenplay provides the intricate canvas on which this very Spanish dance of life and death is played out.

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*"Visually, the pic is an exquisite treat. Close-ups are regularly used, particularly of Cruz's hypnotically photogenic features."* J. Holland, *Variety*

# Creation

UK ~ 108 Min

Rating  
PG

Sat. January 23, 7:30 pm

## Opening night film at 2009 Toronto Film Festival

Featuring riveting performances from real-life couple Paul Bettany and Jennifer Connelly, **Creation** is a profoundly humanist rendering of the story of a man whose scientific ideal irrevocably changed the world.

It's 1858 and Charles Darwin (Bettany, *The Young Victoria*, *The Secret Life of Bees*) has returned from his far-flung geological explorations on the HMS Beagle to settle into a quiet life in the British countryside. He begins to work on [On the Origin of Species](#), destined to become perhaps the most widely read book of natural science. In it, he outlines his theory of evolution through natural selection, inspired by discoveries about the transmutation of species that dispelled the prevailing religious beliefs of the day.

Rather than merely recount these well-known details of Darwin's life, director Jon Amiel explores the hypothesis that history is written more by the inner workings of the human heart than by a strict adherence to scientific fact. Darwin and his religious, God-fearing wife, Emma Connelly (*Little Children*, *A Beautiful Mind*), lost their first daughter,



Annie (Martha West), to illness when she was nine years old. Darwin fought to overcome his guilt and grief while trying to cope with his increasing estrangement from Emma, who in turn watched with sadness and horror as her husband grew more ill by the day, and distanced himself from his four remaining children.

An ongoing imaginary conversation between Darwin and Daughter Annie provides the thematic and structural thread of **Creation**, as she leads her bereaved father to eventual catharsis so he can persevere with his now-legendary work.

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*"Thoughtful and moving... Bettany is brilliant. To be reminded of the power of love to redeem and repair, catch **Creation**."* [Empire Magazine](#)

# The Last Station

Germany/Russia/UK ~ 112 Min Not Rated

Sat. February 20, 7:30 pm

## Best actress award ~ Helen Mirren ~ Rome Film Festival 2009

Under the accomplished direction of Michael Hoffman, who also wrote the script from Jay Parini's novel about Leo Tolstoy's last days, **The Last Station** settles into a lushly scenic drama, featuring Christopher Plummer as Tolstoy and the incomparable Helen Mirren as his wife Sofya.

After brief initial glimpses of Tolstoy and Sofya, we are introduced to young Valentin Bulgakov (James McAvoy) who is applying for the job of the great man's secretary. A naive zealot, a priggish follower of the worldwide Tolstoyan movement that espouses celibacy, communal property and passive resistance, Bulgakov is shocked to discover that the man hiring him expects him to spy on the Tolstoys as part of his duties. Vladimir Chertkov (Paul Giamatti) is a devoted acolyte of the writer and leader of his international movement. He knows he has no greater enemy than Sofya, who wants the royalties from her husband's work to stay in the family, while Chertkov wants the copyright deeded to humanity.



The real focus of this film, however, is the complex and compelling love story between Tolstoy and the woman who bore him 13 children, the woman who copied out [War and Peace](#) in longhand six times, the great passion and frustration of his life, Countess Sofya. From the opening shot of her descending a flight of stairs, the regal Mirren, whose father was Russian, creates a Sofya as conservative as her husband is anarchic, his opposite in any number of ways. Plummer plays Tolstoy as someone who has relaxed into his greatness. His Tolstoy has a largeness of spirit that makes it impossible to be constrained by anything, not even his own philosophy.

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*"If **The Last Station** begins with a quote from *War and Peace's* Prince Andrei that "everything I know only because I love", it ends with our understanding of how complicated that simple sentence turns out to be".* K. Turan, [LA Times](#)

# Moscow, Belgium

(Aanrijding in Moscou)

Belgium ~ 102 Min Not Rated Subtitles

Sat. February 27, 7:30 pm

**Moscow, Belgium** is as wonderfully contradictory as its title. A realistic romantic comedy with considerable raffish charm, it looks at love's struggles with an offbeat eye. The title is the name of a neighbourhood in the Belgian city of Ghent, where the film is set. The film deals candidly with where love comes from and where it goes.

The film opens with Matty (Barbara Sarafian) walking down the aisle of her local supermarket with a face that couldn't be bleaker. At age 41, she and her three children have been abandoned by her art teacher husband, Werner (Johan Heldenbergh) who's gone off to live with a 22-year-old former student. Leaving the supermarket parking space, she collides with a huge truck driven by the red-haired, red-bearded Johnny (Jurgen Delnaet). But the crash itself is nothing compared to the verbal collision that comes next.

Johnny is a man two years sober and eager to discover himself. He is ready to love a woman, and won't be put off by Matty's attitude, demeanour, and all her frustrations.



And then it turns out that the ex-husband, and love of her life, is still very much in the picture. Johnny also soon turns out to be a complex individual with a past. In the end Matty has to choose between taking a chance on an imperfect man or trying to mend a broken marriage.

In his impressive debut film, Director Christophe van Rompaey draws us deeply into the lives of these characters and underscores that choices in love are rarely clean and easy.

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*"In this charmer of a movie, love is like the 10-ton truck driven by one of the unlikely sweethearts. It hits—and it hits hard."* K Turan, [calendarlive.com](#)

# Fierce Light

When Spirit Meets Action

Canada ~ 97 Min Rating PG Documentary

Wed. March 03, 7:30 pm

**Best Documentary: Most Popular Canadian Film - Vancouver Film Festival.**

Building on *ScaredSacred*, Velcrow Ripper's previous documentary, which explored the nature of spirituality in its many manifestations, **Fierce Light** examines the similar terrain of spiritual activism. Employing a travelogue structure, Ripper and his cameras traverse various countries seeking those spots where peace-minded people are trying to make a difference using spirituality as a source of inspiration. To protest the destruction of an inner-city farm in central Los Angeles, for example, actress Daryl Hannah spends some of her year in 2006 sitting in a tree; Ripper returns to her several times with a sense of discovery, and each time her motivations become more poignant and clear.



Many others make memorable appearances in the film, from activist Buddhists to Vietnamese monks, as well as those protesting the discrimination against India's untouchables. Ripper effectively demonstrates that a number of committed people are trying to turn destructive forces around by changing the way we think and feel about our world, but more importantly, how we choose to act during our time on Earth. This film will inspire reflection and discussion long after the credits roll.

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*"The material is intriguing and affecting."* J. Anderson, [Eye Weekly](#)

# Love & Savagery

Canada/Ireland ~ 95 Min

Not  
Rated

Sat. March 06, 7:30 pm

Salmar Grand

From Canadian director John N. Smith, comes **Love and Savagery**, an exploration of love, lust and spirituality and how the three don't necessarily mix well together.

This gripping love story was written by Newfoundland poet and screenwriter, Des Walsh, who collaborated with Smith on *The Boys of St. Vincent* and is inspired by Walsh's 1989 book of poetry *Love and Savagery*. The film is set in 1969 mostly in County Clare, Ireland, though the way life unfolds in this village, it could just as easily be 1869.

Michael McCarthy (Allan Hawco), a budding geologist and poet, has made the trek from his native Newfoundland to County Clare to study the region's unique limestone formations, known as the Burren. But it's not just these rocks that catch Michael's fancy. Things get complicated for this Newfoundlander when he falls hard for the waitress at the hotel where he's staying. Cathleen O'Connell (Sarah Greene) initially tries to rebuff his advances and it's soon clear that most of the village would rather this Canadian keep his distance from the young woman.

She finally breaks the news to Michael that she's com-



mitted to a life in the nunnery, a choice he refuses to accept. What is intriguing in the film is the way Smith and Walsh underline the grey areas in the conflict. Cathleen does want to devote her life to God but she can't deny the intensity of her feelings for Michael, and Michael is, in some ways, insensitive both to her choice and to the culture of her village.

Smith has an extraordinary ability to bring the best out of his actors. Hawco is convincing as the rather hard-headed poet, but it's newcomer Greene who takes this film to another level. She's a force of nature—beautiful, expressive and impossible to keep your eyes off.

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*"Montreal cinematographer Pierre Letarte does a great job of capturing the landscapes of Ireland and Newfoundland, neatly emphasizing the similarities between the Emerald Isle and The Rock."* [The Montreal Gazette](#)

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# Up in the Air

USA ~ 108 Min

Rating  
PG

Sat. March 13, 7:30 pm

Salmar Grand

Fans of Jason Reitman's previous two features, *Thank You for Smoking* and *Juno*, will be both surprised and reassured by **Up in the Air**. In this film he has delved into even more complex and timely psycho-social territory.

Based on the novel by Walter Kirn, **Up in the Air** offers darkly humorous insights into corporate America and male mid-life crisis. Ryan Bingham (George Clooney) is a "career transition consultant"—essentially someone who fires people for a living. Hired by downsizing firms to make the personal, well, impersonal, Bingham, in his perfectly tailored suits and professionally remote manner, aces the task. Bingham's one real emotional investment is in his mastery of business travel.

One day the boss Craig Gregory (Jason Bateman) introduces him to their newest colleague, the aptly named Natalie Keener (Anna Kendrick) who wants to revolutionize the transition industry by using video conferencing out of corporate headquarters. Bingham is horrified,



not only because this signals a trivialization of his skills, but also because his travel will stop. This traumatic turn of events also occurs just as Bingham falls for a fellow traveler Alex (Vera Farmiga, *The Departed*).

While smart, sexy and very funny, Reitman's film is so exquisitely timed, so filled with multifaceted characters and plot twists, that it perfectly captures the zeitgeist of America's current social and economic turmoil.

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*"It's rare to find a romantic comedy that is smart, and where the dialogue is the funniest thing about the movie and where the woman is equal to the man."* [Canwest News Service](#)

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# Cooking with Stella

Canada ~ 103 Min

Rating  
G

Some  
Subtitles

Sat. March 20, 7:30 pm

Salmar Grand

Transplanting the upstairs-downstairs comedy to New Delhi, Dilip Mehta has crafted a delightful feature debut with his acclaimed sister Deepa (*Water, Heaven on Earth*). Featuring charming turns from Don McKellar (*Where the Truth Lies*) and Lisa Ray (*Water*) and Seema Biswas (*Water*), **Cooking with Stella** is great fun to watch as it offers a glimpse of how Canadians live in India's capital.

As head housekeeper at a diplomatic residence in New Delhi, Stella (Biswas) serves up delectable dishes to a succession of Ottawa civil servants. But while she sets a divine table, some of her other activities are less above board. She skims inflated bills to pad her modest salary and raids her employer's pantry for her own "duty free" business.

The arrival of Maya (Ray) and Michael (McKellar) initially disrupts Stella's routine. To her surprise, the wife is the diplomat while the husband stays home to look after their baby daughter. He also has designs on her kitchen! When Michael, a trained chef, discovers Stella's culinary talents, he asks her to be his guru and teach him the secrets of



authentic Indian cooking. She warily agrees and eventually her trepidation turns to pleasure.

Meanwhile the beautiful and virtuous Tannu (Shriya Saran) joins the household to care for the baby. Determined to protect her turf, Stella plots her slyest ruse yet. Biswas, as Stella, is both commanding and coy, especially in her market and kitchen scenes, a proud and complex Indian working in a Canadian enclave, redeeming all deceptions with a radiant smile.

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*"A light, clever and enjoyable comedy... Don McKellar and Lisa Ray are terrific... but it is the Indian cast members who have the most fun in the Mehtas' fleet-footed satire."* J. Anderson, *Eye Weekly*

# The Young Victoria

Canada/UK/USA ~ 100 Min

Rating  
G

Sat. March 27, 7:30 pm

**Closing night film of 2009 Toronto International Film Festival**

Acclaimed director Jean-Marc Vallée (C.R.A.Z.Y.) returns with **The Young Victoria**, a delicate and romantic look at England's last golden age. The film stars the charismatic Emily Blunt (*The Jane Austen Book Club*) as Victoria and follows her struggle to succeed as the ruler of England, a quest blocked by her mother, The Duchess of Kent (Miranda Richardson, *Paris, je t'aime*) and her odious "advisor", Sir John Conroy (Mark Strong, *Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day*).

Widowed at a young age, the Duchess has been convinced by Conroy that she must at all costs keep Victoria away from the court in order to preserve her own position despite the complaints of King William IV (Jim Broadbent, *Vera Drake*), Victoria's uncle, who clearly wants his niece to succeed him. When Victoria is finally crowned, she's unaware of the potential ramifications of her actions and allows herself to be misled by the dashing Lord Melbourne (Paul Bettany, *A Beautiful Mind*) who may be using her youth and inexperience to further enhance his own position.



Enter Prince Albert (Rupert Friend, *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*) who charms Victoria by refusing to stick to the script given him by his scheming relations.

**The Young Victoria** gives us an in-depth portrait of the often ruthless machinations that have characterized the dealings between royal families. But Vallée's film is also a truthful romance; from the very first meeting, we sense a mutual bond between Albert and Victoria, despite the restrictions placed on their interaction. The film is a memorable, sophisticated and charming exploration of English history.

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*"Anyone who complains they don't make love stories like they used to will get a kick out of **The Young Victoria**."* D. Elley, *Variety*

# Girl from Monaco

## (La Fille de Monaco)

France ~ 108 Min Rating 14A Subtitles

Sat. April 03, 7:30 pm

No matter how old, successful or powerful you are, love and sex can still make a complete fool out of you, under the right circumstances. This truth plays out often enough in public life, and it is the subject of ***The Girl from Monaco***, a slightly comic, romantic thriller from director Anne Fontaine.

Bertrand, (Fabrice Luchini), a smooth, powerful defense attorney, confident and well-known, is hired for a difficult case. The millionaire widow, Edith Lasalle, (Stephane Audran) is on trial for murder in Monaco, charged with killing a reputed member of the Russian mafia, and she refuses to utter a single word in her defense. From the day he arrives in Monaco, Bertrand finds himself shadowed by Zem (Christophe Abadi), a tall, dark young man in a black suit and tie, hired as a bodyguard to stay with him at all times. Here is a nice pairing of opposites, an odd couple, if you will. Bertrand is quick, loquacious, cerebral, and Zem is watchful, terse and elemental.



The title character, Audrey (Louise Bourgoin), has a beauty and energy that are both unsettling. The lawyer first sees Audrey on a news show, doing the weather report for a local TV station. Later, when he happens to meet her, she immediately takes an interest in this man twice her age. She's friendly, flirty, engaging, inviting, and he is, by turns, alarmed and delighted. She is either the best or worst possible thing that could happen to a middle-aged guy.

This film creates an inviting world for the viewer. Monaco, as presented here, is a mix of opulent splendor and small-town coziness with a lively nightlife.

*"Audrey is Bourgoin's first screen role—an audacious debut in a notable, worthwhile picture."* Sfgate.com

# The Horse Boy

USA ~ 93 Min Rating PG Documentary

Wed. April 07, 7:30 pm

In 2004 Rupert Issacson and his wife Kristin found out their little boy, Rowan, had autism. Traditional therapies weren't helping the child who fell further into fits of tantrums and incontinence. Raising Rowan they best they could, Rupert and Kristin faced a bleak future with a boy unable to break free from his mental containment. And then Rowan met Betsy, a neighborhood horse, and he opened up in ways his parents never thought possible.

Directed by Michel Orion Scott, ***The Horse Boy*** is a potent documentary studying Rowan as he finds comfort in the presence of horses, encouraging Rupert to consider a rather bold alternative to the daily grind of pills and meltdowns. Flying the family over to Mongolia, Rupert and Kristin would introduce Rowan to the world of shamanistic healing, crossing the countryside by horse and van to reach an area where herds of reindeer roam, and hoping to engage the little boy's obsession with animals.



The documentary depicts nearly every single step of the odyssey, observing the family struggle with Rowan's mental and physical fatigue. There are setbacks and frustrations. Though they have the cameras right up in their faces, Rupert and Kristin show outstanding patience throughout the film, though their weariness is palpable. The vistas are gorgeous and ***The Horse Boy*** captures Rowan as he opens up to the world while riding along. While still prone to panic, Rowan shows astounding development out in the middle of Mongolia, embracing the experience the best he can.

*"The film includes expert testimony from autism experts, including the famous Temple Grandin, an autistic professor at Colorado State U."* rogerebert.com

# SALMON ARM SHOWTIMES



Shall We Kiss	Sat.	Jan. 9	7:30 pm	Salmar Classic
Broken Embraces	Sat.	Jan. 16	7:30 pm	Salmar Classic
Creation	Sat.	Jan. 23	7:30 pm	Salmar Classic
International Film Festival	Jan. 29 - Feb 6			
The Last Station	Sat.	Feb. 20	7:30 pm	Salmar Classic
Moscow, Belgium	Sat.	Feb. 27	7:30 pm	Salmar Classic
Fierce Light	Wed.	Mar. 3	7:30 pm	Salmar Classic
Love & Savagery	Sat.	Mar. 6	7:30 pm	Salmar Grand
Up in the Air	Sat.	Mar. 13	7:30 pm	Salmar Grand
Cooking with Stella	Sat.	Mar. 20	7:30 pm	Salmar Grand
The Young Victoria	Sat.	Mar. 27	7:30 pm	Salmar Classic
Girl From Monaco	Sat.	Apr. 3	7:30 pm	Salmar Classic
The Horse Boy	Wed.	Apr. 7	7:30 pm	Salmar Classic

[www.shuswapfilm.net](http://www.shuswapfilm.net)



## Theatre:

Salmar Classic  
(360 Alexander St.)

Salmar Grand  
(100 Hudson Street NW)

## Reserves:

VISA or MasterCard  
Reservation line (24 hr):  
250 832 - 2294  
*Convenience Charge Applies*

## Tickets:

Single - \$6.00 /  
5 film pass - \$25.00  
Available at the door or  
advance tickets at  
Wearabouts  
(350 Alexander St.)  
*Convenience Charge Applies*

Get Ready for our 21st Annual

## Shuswap International Film Festival

Jan. 29 - Feb. 6, 2010

- Opening Night Reception
- Experience the Music, Dance, and Flavour of Africa
- Prizes & Gifts

*Watch for details in our Festival Guide appearing mid January*

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