ISSUE 14

WINTER 2026



FEATURING:
A FULL RUN DOWN OF OSCAR PREDICTIONS

THE BEST ROMCOMS FOR FEB 14TH

AND MORE!

THE VALENTINES EDITION

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WUTHERING HEIGHTS

By Beatriz Fish

THE LATEST EDITION TO EMERALD FENNELL'S FILMOGRAPHY IS YET ANOTHER MODERN ADAPTATION OF THE 1847 GOTHIC ROMANCE BY EMILY BRONTË. TO DATE THERE HAVE BEEN AT LEAST 5 FILMS MADE ALL LOOSELY BASED ON THE NOVEL BUT OVERALL THERE HAVE BEEN 25+ FILM AND TV ADAPTATIONS OF BRONTË'S BOOK.

Fennell is most well known for her 2023 movie "Saltburn" that grossed a total of $21 million in box offices during its theatrical release. Before this she had directed and co-directed many other widely successful film and tv such as "Promising Young Woman" starring Carey Mulligan.



The upcoming "Wuthering Heights" starring Margot Robbie as Catherine Earnshaw and Jacob Elordi as Heathcliff is not set to be an accurate portrayal of the novel, this is evident already from the costumes that are not period accurate and seem to jump between eras.



Charlie XCX has composed a 12 song album however it is not confirmed that all 12 will be featured. "Wuthering Heights" ironically releases in cinemas on the 14th of February and it is rated in the UK as a 16+, its projected to gross $20-25 million in box offices potentially making it Fennell's highest grossing film yet but that is yet to be revealed.

Despite the film's period inaccuracy and potentially controversial casting choices the upcoming adaptation of "Wuthering Heights" is very highly anticipated for book lovers and fans of the director.

VALENTINES BROWNIES



By Lili Blofeld

Ingredients

Brownie Batter:

- 185g unsalted butter
- 185g dark chocolate
- 85g plain flour
- 40g cocoa powder
- 50g white chocolate chips
- 50g milk chocolate chips
- 3 large eggs
- 275g golden caster sugar

Frosting & Decor:

- 115g unstalted butter (softened)
- 180g icing sugar
- ¼ tps vanilla extract
- Red food colouring
- Heart-shaped sprinkles (optional)

Recipe

1. Pre-heat the oven to 180°C (160°C fan), and line a 20cm square tin with baking paper.
2. Cut the 185g unsalted butter and dark chocolate into piece. Melt them together on a low heat in a bowl over a saucepan of hot water.
3. Sift the plan flour and cocoa powder into a medium bowl.
4. Whisk the eggs with the golden caster sugar until very pale, thick and doubled in size. This should take around 3-8 minutes.
5. Gently fold the cooled, but not solidified melted chocolate mixture into the egg mixture.
6. Combine the flour/cocoa into the bowl and gently fold in until fudgy.
7. Stir in the white and milk chocolate chips.
8. Pour into the tin and bake for 25 minutes. If the centre still wobbles bake for 5 minutes more.
9. Take it out of the oven when the top looks shiny and papery

1. While cooling, in a small bowl, cream the 115g unsalted butter, icing sugar, vanilla extract, and food colouring until light and fluffy.
2. Transfer to a piping bag and set aside.
3. Once the brownies have cooled slightly, cut then into 16 squares.
4. With a clean finger press a heart indent into the centre of each brownie.
5. Pipe the pink frosting into the indents. If desired top with sprinkles.

Rom

Lilianna Moyes &

She's The Man

SHE'S THE MAN IS A HILARIOUS FILM STARRING CHANNING TATUM AND AMANDA BYNES. THE FILM FOCUSES ON VIOLA AND HER ASPIRATIONS FOR EQUALITY IN FOOTBALL. HOWEVER, THE GIRLS TEAM AT HER SCHOOL ,CORNWALL, GOES BUST! VIOLA GOES OUT OF HER WAY TO TAKE HER TWIN BROTHER'S PLACE AT ILLYRIA PREPARATORY SCHOOL. WE FOLLOW HER ALONG THE STORY AS TRIES TO CONCEAL HER TRUE IDENTITY WHILE FALLING FOR DUKE. I PERSONALLY THINK THIS IS A BRILLIANT FILM FOR YOUR FEBRUARY HALF TERM AS THE PERFECT ROM-COM. IT'S HEART WARMING, HILARIOUS AND EXHILARATING. YOU CAN WATCH THIS ON ITVX FOR FREE!

10 Things I Hate About You

10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU IS A CLASSIC ROM COM THAT I BELIEVE EVERYONE SHOULD WATCH. THIS MOVIE STARS HEATH LEDGER AND JULIA STILES AS PATRICK VERONA AND KAT STRATFORD WHO ARE BOTH IN HIGH SCHOOL. THE STORY FOLLOWS THEM THROUGH A CHAOTIC LOVE STORY WHICH IS BOTH EMOTIONAL AND FUNNY ALL AT ONCE. MY FAVOURITE SCENE IN THIS MOVIE IS WHEN KAT FINALLY LETS LOOSE AT THE PARTY ENABLING US TO SEE A WHOLE NEW SIDE TO HER. I ALSO BELIEVE THIS REVEALS THE MOST EXCITING PART OF THE STORY TO US. I THROUGHLY RECOMEND EVERYONE WATCHES THIS OVER HALF TERM!





Coms

Anya Azzopardi

To All The Boys Ive Loved Before

THIS ROM-COM IS A COMFORT MOVIE TO ALL. THIS TRILOGY IS BASED ON THE NOVELS WRITTEN BY JENNY HAN. IT WAS RELEASED FIRST IN 2018 WITH LANA CONDOR PLAYING THE MAIN CHARACTER LARA-JEAN COVEY. THE MOVIE IS ABOUT A TEENAGE GIRL WHOSE SECRET, PERSONAL LOVE LETTERS TO ALL FIVE OF HER FORMER CRUSHES ARE MYSTERIOUSLY MAILED OUT. THE MOVIE SHOWS LARA-JEAN NAVIGATING HIGH SCHOOL, LOVE AND EMOTIONAL GROWTH.

People We Meet On Vacation

THIS NEWLY RELEASED ROM-COM (2026) IS BASED ON THE NOVEL WRITTEN BY EMILY HENRY. THE MOVIE IS ABOUT TWO BEST FRIENDS WHO LIVE FAR APART AND HAVE SPENT ONE WEEK AWAY TOGETHER FOR A DECADE. THEIR CONFLICTING CHARACTERS BECOME MORE COMPLICATED AS MORE VACATIONS OCCUR UNTIL THEIR LOVE IS FINALLY UNITED.







The Romance





FALSETTOS

Falsettos is a hilarious and heartbreaking musical about a neurotic New Yorker,Marvin, who leaves his wife and son for his male lover, Whizzer, exploring modern family dynamics, Jewish identity, and masculinity against the backdrop of the emerging AIDS crisis in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It follows Marvin's struggle to keep his "tight-knit family" together as his ex-wife marries his psychiatrist, he reunites with Whizzer, and they all must confront the realities of life, love, and the devastating pandemic. This shows us that love can be overbearing and pressuring this is clear when Marvin makes the choice to go with his male lover. Overall a very tragic but beautiful musical and the songs are comedic goals mostly the comedic ones are performed by whizzer and marvin. Then there's the love story between the psychiatrist and his ex wife which is absolutely amazingly presented.

LES MISERABLES

Les Misérables follows ex-convict Jean Valjean in 19th-century France, seeking redemption while relentlessly hunted by Inspector Javert for breaking parole after stealing bread; he promises to care for orphaned Cosette, daughter of the tragic Fantine, leading them through poverty, revolution in Paris (with student rebels like Marius), love triangles, and sacrifice, ultimately exploring justice, love, and social injustice as Valjean evades Javert and finds peace before dying,. The love story in this follows 3 people: Marius loves Cosette and she loves him back. But there is also eponine who loves him and he keeps telling her how much he loves Cosette and she has a solo on my own singing about how she loves him but if she died he would not care. This then is proved when she and Marius have a duet called a little fall of rain. This is a sad duet where Marius sings that he loves her but when she dies he goes to cosette and they have a duet singing that he loves her so he and Cosette live happily ever after.

In Musicals



BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Beauty and the Beast (the musical) tells the classic fairy tale of Belle, a book-loving girl in a French village, who trades places with her father to become a prisoner in a cursed castle, home to a monstrous Beast who is actually an enchanted prince. To break the curse and become human again, the Beast must learn to love and earn love in return before the last petal falls from a magical rose; meanwhile, the self-absorbed Gaston wants to marry Belle and threatens the castle, forcing Belle and the Beast to confront their feelings and save themselves and the enchanted castle staff (like Lumiere, Cogsworth, Mrs. Potts) from eternal damnation. The love story here is the "beast" aka the prince and belle the towns girl and these 2 are soulmates but another guy likes belle he is the self centred egocentrical guy who believes everyone should want to love him and he is called Gaston. Throughout the whole movie Gaston wanted Belle to marry him even though she told him many times that she does not fancy him. This angers him and there is a fight between him and the beast resulting in him dying for "Love" and Belle and the beast live happily ever after. This shows us that true love can come in the craziest of ways.



MAMMA MIA

Mamma Mia! is a feel-good musical about a young woman, Sophie, on a Greek island who invites three men from her mother Donna's past to her wedding, hoping one of them is her father, leading to comedic chaos and revelations about love, family, and friendship, all set to ABBA's iconic songs. The story follows Sophie's quest for identity as she tries to discover who her dad is before she walks down the aisle, while her mother, Donna, deals with the unexpected return of her former lovers. This has 2 love stories included there is the love between sophie and sky who want to get married but end up not getting married due to them wanting to travel and there is the love story of donna who thinks she can handle everything herself this leads to her falling back for her ex sam carmichael this musical has many songs everyone can to relate to a lot of songs. The love in this story is absolutely amazing yet at times confusing overall this musical is a must watch for romance lovers.

THE ORIGINS OF VALENTINE'S DAY.

It's strangely unclear who St. Valentine was as there are several different versions of the celebration's origin story. The most likely candidate is a third-century Roman priest. Romance comes into the story with Emperor Claudius II's marriage ban for soldiers - he thought the men would be less likely to want to go to war if they had wives and children. St. Valentine seemed to think this wasn't very sporting, so, contrary to the Emperor's new rules, he decided to conduct their marriages in secret. This, unfortunately, did not stay secret for too long, however, landing him in jail and sentenced to death. An 18th century embellishment to the story added that he himself sent the first valentine's card (to his jailer's daughter who he had just cured from blindness), signing it 'from your Valentine.' It's unlikely, however, that any of this is actually true.

WHY FEBRUARY 14th?

Valentine's Day came from the Roman celebration of Lupercalia which was celebrated to purify the city, as well as to improve health and fertility, through the medium of dog and goat sacrifices. Later on, this was borrowed, minus the sacrifices, by the Church and turned into a day celebrating St. Valentine. The first recorded mention of Valentine's being about love was in Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls,* written in 1382.



Fun Fact!

The earliest surviving Valentine's poem was sent by Charles, Duke of Orleans to his wife in the fifteenth century. It begins charmingly with the lines '*Je suis desja d'amour tanné/Ma très doulce Vanentinée*' which roughly translates to 'I am already tired of love/my very sweet Valentine.' Not the most romantic sentiment ever, but he *was* being held at The Tower at the time.

THE ORIGINS OF FRIDAY THE 13TH.

Thirteen being an unlucky number is a superstition that has lasted for centuries. Primarily, this comes from The Last Supper, when there were, of course, thirteen individuals present - Jesus and his Twelve Disciples. There is also a Norse legend where twelve gods are having a dinner party, and Loki, who was not invited, arrives, becoming the thirteenth. He decides to shoot Balder who happened to be the god of joy and gladness so his death spread sorrow over the world. The idea of Friday the Thirteenth being unlucky began cropping up in the nineteenth century, with conflicting origins - from the arrest of the Knight's Templar in 1307 to the 1834 play *Les Finesses des Gribouilles* where a character blames his bad luck from being born on Friday 13th December, 1813.

FRIDAY THE 13TH FILMS.

The *Friday the 13TH* franchise is one of the most successful slasher series in America; comprising of twelve films and a TV series, as well as multiple books, comics, and games. It is second only to the *Halloween* franchise in terms of financial success, so is likely a very important contributor to the superstition of Friday the Thirteenth. After all, I wouldn't call any of the characters who feature in the films extremely lucky...



Fun Fact!

Friday the Thirteenth happens at least once a year, but can happen up to three times - as is the case this year. For a month to have the unlucky day, it must begin on a Sunday.

The Opening Night to War Child's brand new album

How the Arctic Monkeys cultivated a grand new song for a worthy cause

By Jack Geary

If you haven't already heard, it's true, the Arctic Monkeys after 4 years of silence since the conclusion of "The Car" tour in 2023, have released a new single with war child records. The single is titled "Opening night" and to me is undoubtedly another great work from the band. Now, I will admit that initially I wasn't too keen on this single, I listened to it within the first 5 minutes of its release and wasn't blown away. However, upon a second and even third listen, I fell in love with the track completely, though still not massively sold on the frog croak.



This song just feels complete to me, there are elements of Humbug (2009), AM (2013) and certainly more recent works like Tranquillity Base Hotel & Casino (2018) and less so The Car (2022). The way the beat switches into the chorus is flawless, and I think that's where the biggest stylistic similarities to AM (2013) lie. One of my favourite comments that I have heard online was when a TikToker said that "Opening night is like Arabella's older sister" and I think this couldn't be more true, even though it's just a single, it signifies a clear growth in the Arctic Monkeys' musical development. I'd more than happily have a whole album of this new style.



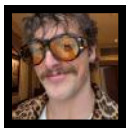
But why have they done this? Well, the single is actually being released as part of a wider, collaborative album called "HELP (2)" by War Child Records that comes out March 6th, so you already know that there will be an article in the next issue of the collective. War child records is a record label created by the War Child charity who aim to raise funds and awareness for children affected by war. This album looks really promising, being produced by James Ford, often known for his work with the Arctic Monkeys, Florence and the Machine and Fontaines D.C.'s "Romance". The album is jammed with big names with tracks from Damon Albarn, The last Dinner party, Beabadoobee, Pulp, Fontaines DC and even Olivia Rodrigo.

I think Opening night was a great teaser to the potential this album has and i am personally really excited to hear it when it comes out, plus the fact that the profits go to War Child is even more of a reason to give it a listen.

Ideal Celebrity Dates




With Holly and Molly




Holly's ideal Celeb date - Gordon Ramsey

For my ideal date with Gordon Ramsay I would love to have him cook me a full 3 course meal! It would consist of vegetarian delicacies which would make my mouth water. I would love to have him cook in an open kitchen so I can observe and see just how he makes the most delicious food. For the starter he would make some harira which is Moroccan soup. This blend of heritage would create an exotic taste which would help to settle any nerves between us. For the main course Gordon would produce a Mchiken with a twist. Instead of containing any actual chicken it would be 100% plant based! This would help to highlight how Gordon takes into account my dietary needs and I would fall head over heels for him. The desert would include some extra magic! Gordon would prepare me a divine chocolate fudge brownie, however I would also have to prepare a dessert that I find best suits him. I personally would choose a zesty lemon cake as I feel like it displays how Gordon may look bland but in reality is packed with passion and flavour.





Molly's ideal Celeb date - Benson Boone

For my dream date with Benson Boone I would love to have a private concert with him. He would sing his top hits and play some new songs that the public haven't heard before. I would love for him to play the piano and teach me how to achieve his incredible vocals. We would write a song together about our love for moonbeam icecream. This would help me understand what moonbeam ice cream really is. Our song would contain my vocals that Benson taught me and he would play the piano. When the clock strikes midnight, we would then hop our way to backflip until the early hours of the morning. Our night of compassion would then continue with him inviting me on tour! I would be his special guest and become a wordwide icon.

The King in Yellow

Evie Olson explores the book, the play, and modern-day interpretations

What is "The King in Yellow"?

"The King in Yellow" is a collection of semi-related short stories by American author Robert W. Chambers, published in 1895. "The King in Yellow" is also the name of a play within Chambers' book - one that drives any who read it to madness. Finally, "The King in Yellow" is a mysterious and malevolent supernatural entity, who inspired some of H.P. Lovecraft's Cthulhu mythos.

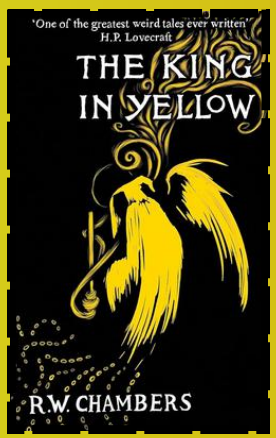
The original edition of the book contained nine short stories and a collection of poems. However, only four of these are related through the "King in Yellow" motif: "The Repairer of Reputations", "The Mask", "In the Court of the Dragon" and "The Yellow Sign". These stories follow a similar unsettling and macabre tone, whilst the collection's later stories are often romantic and lighthearted.

Whilst this collection has always been popular with fans of Weird Fiction, it has recently gained popularity due to an unusual adaptation, in the form of a Minecraft ARG (Alternate Reality Game)

H.P. Lovecraft

H.P. Lovecraft is one of the most famous authors of Sci-Fi and Weird Fiction. Lovecraftian horror - also known as cosmic or eldritch horror - is a subgenre named after Lovecraft that is still very popular. Lovecraft's most famous works, those in his Cthulhu mythos, were inspired by Chambers' collection. Hastur, one of the mythos' entities, is inspired by "The King in Yellow", and named after one of the locations within the play (although the name first appeared in Bierce's 1891 novel "Haïta the Shepherd", in which Hastur is a benevolent god).







ADAPTATIONS

Searching for a world that doesn't exist

One of the most popular and recent adaptations inspired by "The King in Yellow" is a Minecraft ARG, released in October 2025 by YouTuber Wifies. ARGs are a form of transmedia storytelling: they use the real world as a narrative platform, often through player and fan-interaction. "Pokémon GO" is an example that falls under this umbrella term.

In the case of SFAWTDE, Wifies acts as a narrator and puzzle solver, reacting to videos posted by a channel called "AveryTheMayo". Whilst the story is ultimately fiction, this form of storytelling is incredibly immersive, which works brilliantly with the horror elements of the video.

At over 20 million views as of January 2026, SFAWTDE is one of the most popular, modern ARGs. Phrases, such as 'At the crossroads, don't turn left', have cropped up in many fandoms, and edits of the series have amassed hundreds of thousands of views. Fans, including myself, have been encouraged to read the book as a result of the adaptation. Whilst the adaptation isn't true to the book's plot, it takes the themes and recurring motifs and uses them in an interesting original story.

Blackshard

Blackshard is a 2025 first-person exploration game. Set in a labyrinth megastructure, the game is a walking simulator that prompts the player to solve the mysteries of the liminal space. Dialogue crops up from "The Yellow Sign", one of the symbols within Chambers' novel. The colour yellow is a recurring motif throughout the game.

True Detective

The American crime drama "True Detective" is another that takes inspiration from "The King in Yellow". The first season especially ties terms from the novel to its storyline, through names of locations and people.









OSCAR PREDICTIONS

BEST PICTURE

PREDICTED WINNER:



ONE BATTLE AFTER ANOTHER

~

MY WINNER:



SINNERS

One Battle After Another's critical message and electrifying delivery definitely cannot be overlooked, and it is certainly not short of incredible performances: heart-wrenching acting and innovative editing cement the film's final act as a testament to perfect tension building, but I think it falls short in its pacing and relies too heavily on the strengths of the latter half of the film. Sinners, however, is one of the few films in the list which is an original screenplay, and everything about it is so unique. Combining vampires with 1930s Southern USA, boasting multiple powerhouse performances and a melting pot of genres, not to mention a brilliant soundtrack and score, the combination of its originality and the unfaltering execution of this ambitious project allows Sinners to edge out the other nominations and emerge as my top candidate for Best Picture.

BEST ACTOR

PREDICTED WINNER:



TIMOTHEE CHALAMET

~

MY WINNER:



TIMOTHEE CHALAMET

2026 is once again another strong year for the Best Actor category, although somewhat overshadowed this time by the Best Supporting Actor pool, but despite the multitude of talent on display from this year's nominees, for me Timothée Chalamet must be the winner - for one reason: he IS Marty Supreme. Without Timothée Chalamet, Marty Supreme wouldn't be half the film it has emerged as. You can feel the passion oozing from the role, and his portrayal of Marty Mauser almost feels like a reflection of himself. Timothée clearly put his heart and soul into the role, and while I think it may not be the best film of the bunch he does too much heavy lifting to go unnoticed.

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR



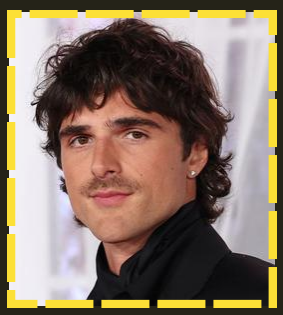
PREDICTED WINNER:



SEAN PENN

~

MY WINNER:



JACOB ELORDI

Honestly, this one was almost a complete toss-up between Sean Penn and Jacob Elordi. On one hand, Sean Penn's character Sergeant Lockjaw is a portrayal of military ruthlessness and the hypocrisy of the patriarchy down to an absolute tee, with his mannerisms, movements, and appearance coming together to create a fully fledged character in his limited screen time - perfectly crafted from the loudest screams to the smallest twitches. On the other hand, Jacob Elordi brings a level of humanity to Frankenstein's creature which I don't think has ever really been seen before. Revolutionising a 200-year-old character is a feat which cannot go unappreciated, and I believe Jacob's contribution to this film will help it to become THE Frankenstein adaptation for decades to come.

BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY

PREDICTED WINNER:



ONE BATTLE AFTER ANOTHER

~

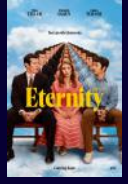
MY WINNER:



TRAIN DREAMS

One Battle After Another is the epitome of a blockbuster film, and the cinematography undoubtedly reflects that, but none of the nominated films are quite as stylistic, unique, and nuanced as Train Dreams. The film is unusual and bold from the very beginning, using a 3:2 aspect ratio as opposed to the modern 2.39:1. The smaller frame means less detail is packed into each shot, but this gives each tree, each leaf, each blade of grass more meaning and more life. Train Dreams allows its story to feed on your imagination, making it feel less like a fantasy and more like its title - a dream. The dream sequences combine stunning visuals with harrowing narrative, forming Train Dreams into an experience which is as beautiful as it is devastating.

BY DYLAN CONNALL











MY TOP 10

Yo its Myles, one of the resident film nerds of The Collective team. So for this issue I've decided to compile my top 10 films of 2025. These are all films that actually released that year as opposed to films I watched that year. I recommend all of these films to anybody, no matter how strange they may be or how uncomfortable they make you feel. So here you go and enjoy...

No 10 - Eternity

Probably my favourite ever rom-com. This under the radar A24 film directed by David Freyne follows a woman (Elizabeth Olsen) who has to pick between her two dead husbands to spend eternity with. Originally when this got announced I believed that this would just be a cheesy rom-com, I was horribly mistaken. What it actually is, is a touching unconventional love story that tackles grief beautifully and is paired with some of my favourite cinematography from any film. And I feel I should mention that at moments it is really funny, so it does still count as a rom-com.

No 9 - Friendship

The most uncomfortable yet funniest film I've ever seen. Tim Robbinson is, and always will be, one of my favourite comedians, so when I found out that he would be making a feature length film with A24, I was really excited. And rightfully so. I'm not going to talk about the plot because it's definitely one of those films you should see completely blind. But trust me, if you don't mind some uncomfortable moments, I believe you will love this film along with any piece of media featuring Tim Robinson.

No 8 - Sinners

I don't think I have anything to say that hasn't already been said but this is simply amazing, everything about this was breathtaking. This goes to show how films from large studios can still have soul and be creative. Please watch this because it's beautiful to witness and it definitely deserved all of its 16 Oscar nominations.

No 7 - The Running Man

I genuinely don't care what people say about this film. It was amazing. All of the sets combined with the cinematography were great, and the acting works well for what they were trying to show. Bobby T was one of my favourite characters (probably ever), especially when paired with Josh Brolin's character. I loved all the hunters as well because their designs were great. I just wanted to mention how everyone is saying that Edgar Wright has lost his signature style, because I could still see it throughout the entire film. All in all I loved it, especially with its relevant messages about politics and corruption.

No 6 - One Battle After Another

I don't really know what to say about this apart from it was fantastic. Every minute was a visual feast and I can see why people are saying it's the best film of last year, as I certainly agree it's up there. Each performance was terrific, especially Sean Penn because wow... That was definitely something (in a good way) and I just love Benicio del Toro because he was brilliant. Overall it was everything I wanted it to be and then a little bit more, so all in all nothing to complain about. It also had some of the funniest moments of any film of the year so that was fun.

FILMS OF 2025











No 5 - The Life Of Chuck

Definitely one of the most beautiful films I saw last year. I think what I took away from this was the same thing people were saying about Superman, I just left wanting to be more like the main characters. I was shocked at how much of the film was practically just a sci-fi movie as it played around with space and time, but I wasn't complaining even though I did really jump at one part! Idk really what to say other than it didn't feel like a 2 hour movie and I just loved every second of it.

No 4 - Chainsaw Man: The Reze Arc

Everything about this was epic. And coming from a substantial Chainsaw Man fan (I've read most of the manga) it was genuinely beautiful to behold, and to see one of my favourite arc's from the manga get adapted into one of the best films of the year was a real highlight for me in 2025. To add to this, as usual, the animation was impeccable and the sound design had a lot of impact (even if a bit loud at points). Aki and the Angel Devil were my favorite characters in the entire film and I loved all of their scenes. Plus everything with the Bomb Devil was just perfect. I loved every second of this man, and yes, for some reason I did cry twice.

No 3 - Marty Supreme

Holy ****. That was beautiful. Definitely not as tense as Uncut Gems, as some people were saying, but that doesn't discount how tense it really was. Not so shockingly Timothée Chalamet was the stand out of the film, because he was spectacular and definitely encapsulates the character of Marty Mauser. But everyone else was good in this as well, especially Odessa A'zion. I've only seen her in this and I Love LA but she's slowly becoming one of my favorite actors. Another stand out for me was Tyler Okonma (Tyler The Creator) because I just loved the contrast between his character and Timothée's character. But yeah, it was an utterly awesome film full of shocking yet sometimes wholesome moments. Saying all that there wasn't enough table tennis because they were my favorite scenes in the film.

No 2 - Bugonia

It's another one of those films that make you fall in love with cinema. Everything about that was genuinely spectacular. I fully believe that Jesse Plemons, in a couple of years, will be considered one of the greats because he has stolen the show in every role I've seen him in. I'm so annoyed he's been snubbed at the Oscars. Another thing I loved about this was just how shocking it can be, because that last 30 minutes had my jaw permanently on the floor as so much happened. It actually shocked me to my core and I haven't had that in ages. But yeah, every single detail was brilliant.

No 1 - Eddington

Unlike the rest of these films I'm not going to write a big long review, because I can't tell you what I think about it. Like obviously I have opinions on it, but I feel it's a disservice to the film to tell you them without you watching it first. So please, if you only watch one thing from this list please watch Eddington, because I believe it will be talked about in schools and especially in film/media classes in the future and for a long time to come.

by Myles Farlam

BEST REPRESENTATIONS OF

BY TOM

THE NOTEBOOK - NOAH AND ALLIE

"So it's not going to be easy. It's going to be really hard; we are going to have to work at this everyday, but I want to do that because I want you. I want all of you forever, every day. You and me..."



The notebook is a perfect reminder that true love isn't just about passion; it's a testament that love isn't always easy or perfect. Love requires patience, effort and sacrifice—much like Noah's unwavering dedication to Allie, even after years apart. Their relationships show the small things–a promise, a gesture, a shared memory–that leave a lasting impact. They show us that even when apart or challenged, love is always worth fighting for. Real love, like Noah and Allie's, isn't about finding someone to be with, but finding someone you can't imagine being without. He wrote her 365 letters. He built the house she described to him that one summer. He reads her their life story every night to remind her of the love they fought for.

10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU - KAT + PATRICK



"But mostly I hate the way I don't hate you. Not even a little bit... not even at all..."

10 Things I Hate About you shows love through emotional growth and how admiration over time can flourish into something beautiful. What starts as something artificial, motivated by Patrick's need for money and Kat's resistance to romance; grows into a love linked with acceptance and equality, and Patrick begins to admire Kat's independence and aspirations, while Kat sees past Patrick's facade and falls for his true colours, "your eyes have a little green in them..." their relationship shows that meaningful love requires vulnerability to grow into something beautiful. And something worth seeing past imperfections for.

HOWLS MOVING CASTLE - HOWL + SOPHIE

"A heart is a heavy burden.. I'm only really myself when I'm with you..."



Howl searched his whole adult life trying to find Sophie, he built a castle to travel the world looking for her. He worked as a double agent in the war just in case one of the kingdoms were hers. He knew who she was regardless of her looks, he loved her even when she was under a spell to make her old, and figured out a way to make her feel beautiful again, he never rejects her for her appearance, he loves who she is not what she is. He trusts that she'd love him enough to save him, and yet let her figure it out in her own time. His lonely falling heart was caught by her and she never let it go, even when she didn't know she had it. She fell so hard for him that she told his past self to find her in the future, which eventually led to the start again. Their love is shown through actions not words. Their love is shown as a powerful force that enables them to confront their flaws and become their true selves together.

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN - ENNIS + JACK





"I wish I knew how to quit you..."

The Love in Brokeback Mountain presented through Jack and Ennis is shown as something that endures through fear, repression and social expectations at the time. Their love is rarely verbalised, particularly by Ennis who expresses his love through a touch to Jack's ear, showing that perhaps their love is beyond language yet is silenced by a society that can't accept that love happens to anyone, no matter the gender. The mountain itself can be seen as a refuge, where their love can flourish freely away from judgement and masculine norms, and perhaps being set in the Wyoming wilderness shows that their love is as natural as anything else. Even though loving each other in the open world could end in being fatal, they endure as their love is all they need to feel themselves, it never fully dims. In fact they can barely stand to be without each other.

LOVE THROUGHOUT FILM

LONGSTAFFE

EDWARD SCISSORHANDS - EDWARD + KIM

"Well then why did you do it?"
"Because you asked me too..."



Kim's love for Edward in this movie stems from when Edward came into her life unexpectedly and made her realise that the love she wanted was not what was forced upon her. She grew up loving the boy with scissors for hands. Not because he was sharp, but because he was gentler than anyone she knew. Everyone feared the way he touched, but she watched how he handled the snow. He taught her that broken things can still shape beauty. And that silence can speak louder than any well worded goodbye. This relationship presents love as something that pulls you to anyone, even if they are different, and shows us that love guides our hands and changes us for the better. Just like Edward got into sculpting because Kim was the only art he ever knew.

THE AMAZING SPIDERMAN - PETER + GWEN

"You're wrong about us being on different paths, we're not on different paths. You're my path... you're always going to be my path..."





In The Amazing Spiderman, the love between Gwen and Peter is the picture perfect representation of young love. Tender and fragile yet builds to something that becomes Peter's world. What starts as quick glances and protective gestures–Peter attracted by Gwen's intelligence and compassion, and Gwen attracted to Peter's moral integrity and mysterious nature–begins to fuel why Peter does what he does best, protecting the city, or even protecting her. While Peter's world comes with risk, the identity of spiderman threatening their bond, Gwen loves Peter for what's behind the mask, that's why Peter is always drawn back after leaving to protect her. Peter takes time out of fighting crime, to spend time with who he truly loves, that's why they are special, because they understand balance, and don't just love each other for the facade, they work to figure each other out. And that brings them closer together.

ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND - JOEL + CLEMENTINE

"I can't remember anything without you..."



This film presents love in how it affects you. This film understands heartbreak in a way, not as a drama but as a memory. Love here isn't perfect; it's messy, repetitive and deeply humane. It shows that erasing someone doesn't erase what they changed in you. The pain hurts but the absence hurts more. The film reminds us that memories aren't burdens, they are proof that we lived. In Joel's case even knowing how it ends, he understands his love is always worth starting again, especially for clementine. Memories are what spark love and what lead them into something beautiful even if it is through sorrow like Joel. Yet it shows the more you work for love, the purer it is. This film suggests that it isn't worth losing someone to realize their worth. As even when memories are removed, people are drawing back to the same connection of love and longing.

BEFORE SUNRISE - CELINE + JESSE

"I like to feel his eyes on me when I look away"





Before sunrise shows us that love is sought after by those who think they need it the least. Celine expresses that loving someone and being loved means so much to her. Yet before she met Jesse she always made fun of it, implying that perhaps everything we do in life is to be loved just that little bit more. Their time spent together is just theirs and their own creation, showing that the love you experience is something that deep down you've been wanting for a long time, and with the right person, it can become your own unique kind of love. Celine and Jesse's love is built on the conversations that night in Vienna rather than physical attraction.Their kiss is more meaningful because of the emotional buildup not the desire of the moment. The admiration is built on where it is formed and who it is with and that's what makes it special.

STRANGER THINGS



FINALE

BY SOPHIE, KATIE & ILAKKIYA



The epilogue opens with Robin speaking on the WSQK, recalling how the main characters and the town have changed since we last saw them. The narrative follows the main party preparing for their graduation, they all come together to celebrate this achievement. Where, Dustin (as valedictorian) delivers a speech that parallels what Eddie envisioned to do at his graduation.

Later on, Jonathan, Nancy, Steve and Robin meet for one last time, they sit on top of the WSQK building, to reflect on their new lives (college and work) and promise to meet each other once a month.

Joyce and Hopper finally receive their date at Enzo's - which all us Jopper fans have been waiting for since season 3. Their story perfectly ends with Hopper proposing and then dancing to “At Last” by Etta James.

The story ends with the party playing one last game of D&D in the Wheelers’ basement, mirroring the opening of season 1.

This cyclical moment is emotional, as their final campaign finishes, we get a flash forward into the future on what the party will be doing next; Mike a storyteller, Max and Lucas will stay together, and the journeys of Will and Dustin at college. Mike creates a theory that Eleven survived, she’s somewhere far away from Hawkins, with three waterfalls - “I believe.” They each place their D&D books on the shelf and walk up the stairs.

The final scene is Mike closing the door on Holly and her friends playing D&D, which symbolises the start for a new group and the end of the party’s adolescence.



BEST SONGS



In my opinion, the soundtrack for season 5 was PHENOMENAL, these are my opinions on this soundtrack.

Episode 1 - This opened perfectly with “Rockin' Robin”, a classic song that got us all grooving, and “Upside Down” by Diana Ross which made us all wonder what was happening.

Episode 2 - One of my favourite songs “Fernando”, an iconic song from the 80s, which portrayed the scene of Holly Wheeler getting hunted by a Demogorgon flawlessly.

Episode 7 - We can’t forget to mention “Running Up that Hill” which saved Max’s life not only once but twice from Vecna. As Max opened her eyes “When it’s cold I’d like to die” began to play, this enhanced the emotion of the scene - leaving not a single dry eye in sight (including myself).

FINALE - Princes’ power records were used to blow up the upside down, first “When Doves Cry” played, putting everyone in high spirits, after the victorious battle.
This mood shifted entirely when the first chords of “Purple Rain” began, as Mike and Eleven said their final goodbyes. Honestly, I think this was the most heart-breaking scene, the flashbacks of their first meeting. Mike releasing a gut wrenching scream and all the characters' reactions - left uncontrollable tears streaming down the faces of all those who watched.

Epilogue - The Duffer Brothers knew what they were doing by playing Princes’ “Purple Rain" and “Landslide” by Fleetwood Mac BACK TO BACK. This was a direct hit, affecting the already hysterical emotions.
Finally, as the credits began to roll “Heroes” by David Bowie started to play, which signalled the end of this brilliant series. Prior to this, the Peter Gabriel rendition was played in season 1 after Will’s ‘body’ was found at the quarry, and the final episode of season 3 as the Byers were leaving to go to California - after Hopper’s ‘death.’ The purpose of this song playing at each of these crucial moments emphasises the vulnerability of the characters but also their loss. By playing the Bowie version, this reinforced the devastating loss to us fans after all these years and how much this series truly meant to each and every fan.

Audrey Hepburn

When looking back at the icons of classical cinema, especially romantic comedies, Audrey Hepburn's name and face is visible around every corner. Whether it be from her breakout role as Princess Ann in Roman Holiday, or her vast humanitarian experiences both in early and later life, Audrey Hepburn is fascinatingly quintessential in looking back at Hollywood's romance masterpieces.

On the 4th of May 1929, Audrey Kathleen Ruston (later Hepburn when she became an actress) was born in Belgium from a Dutch noblewoman and high-class British banker father. She grew up amongst riches in her early life, but her parents separation when she was only six years old catalysed a string of pivotal events that framed the rest of her life. When WWII began, Hepburn and her mother moved to Arnhem, Netherlands, in hopes for safety against the conflict. However, the mass food shortages and transportation of Dutch Jews left Hepburn and her family in an incredibly vulnerable position, ultimately spurring on her passion for retaliation from oppression. Throughout her early teenage years, Hepburn helped in the resistance by assisting a doctor's office as well as carrying secret messages to and from rebel bases as children were the least suspected to deceive the police. Her time at dance school also benefitted with her putting on secret, invite-only ballet performances to raise money for the Dutch Resistance. After being seriously ill due to hunger, Hepburn got a ballet scholarship and pursued her love of the delicate art. Although this was subsequently short-lived after being told that it was an unattainable goal since the deprivation during the war gave her a weak constitution. This is when she began to gain interest in acting.

From her debut performance in Roman Holiday (1953), Hepburn starred in 26 movies across her career with her final role being a cameo as an angel in Steven Spielberg's Always (1989). Initially, Hepburn gained experience from performing in the West End where she was then spotted by casting agents for Hollywood films. The fame only escalated when Roman Holiday was such a box office hit, instantly establishing her as a well-known actress with a BAFTA, Golden Globe and Academy Award highlighting her skill. Going on from this, her 7-film contract with Paramount meant that she starred in other rom-coms such as Sabrina (1954) and Funny Face (1957) starring alongside icons such as Humphrey Bogart, Fred Astaire and Henry Fonda. Potentially her most well-renowned is her performance in the 1961 film Breakfast at Tiffany's as the character Holly Golightly. Her portrayal of playing a strong, independent woman was inspirational and so expertly executed that it has become a statement of iconicism lasting decades. Moreover, the film gained Hepburn her fourth Oscar nomination. After that, she co-starred with Cary Grant in comedy-thriller Charade (1963) which she frequently regarded as the most fun and her favourite film she ever made.



ACTRESS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The following year put her into controversy surrounding her being cast in My Fair Lady (1964) over the Broadway star of Julie Andrews which was then further complicated by the studio's decision to dub over Hepburn's singing with Marni Nixon. Her final film before she semi-retired was Wait Until Dark (1967) which gave her fifth and final Oscar nomination for Best Actress. After this she took a step back from acting to focus on family life, nonetheless still doing occasional roles every few years until her final performance in 1989.

Her turbulent experiences from the war, especially her involvement in the Dutch resistance, were high motivations for Hepburn to continue to give aid to people, especially children, in crisis. Most notably she became a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador in 1988 until her death in 1993 where she went on an incredible amount of excursions. Her first of which was to Ethiopia at a time of great famine caused by civil strife from a government that weaponised hunger and desperation as a source to drive rebels out of hiding. This is something Hepburn could greatly empathise with due to her enduring the overtaking of the Netherlands from the Nazi regime: soldiers took the vast majority of Dutch towns' food, leaving families in a state of desperation and illness. Hepburn also did an incredible amount of media press conferences and interviews across a list of countries advocating for the necessity of children's rights and wellbeing. Later, in 1992, she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom and went straight into her humanitarian expedition in Somalia. During this trip is when she experienced agonising abdominal pains which turned out to be a rare form of abdominal ap cancer originating in her appendix. She was quick to go to LA for treatment but was seen to be unsuccessful due to it metastasising in her body.

Her partner Robert Wolders has said in interviews that he asked Hepburn if she ever regrets doing so much travelling for UNICEF in her final months at which she replied: "Robbie, think of all we would've missed" truly displaying how passionate she was about her work as an activist.
She died at her Switzerland home on the 20th of January 1993, surrounded by her family. On Christmas, just a month before her passing, she told her family that "It was the most beautiful Christmas I ever had", giving her life the simple perfection to her final days that she so deserved after living such a fulfilling and devoted life as a cinema icon, aspiring humanitarian and a loving mother.



By Jessica Holloway-Mclean

TIMOTHEE CHALAMET: HOLLYWOOD'S MODERN ICON.





BY SUSAN SZWEJKOWSKA







EARLY LIFE AND BACKGROUND-

~BORN IN DECEMBER 1995, TIMOTHEE IS SON TO NICOLE FLENDE, WHO IS A THIRD-GENERATION NEW YORKER, FORMER BROADWAY DANCER, AND REAL ESTATE BROKER; AND MARC CHALAMET WHO IS FRENCH-BORN AND WORKED AS AN EDITOR FOR UNICEF.

~HE SPEAKS FLUENT FRENCH AND WAS RAISED JEWISH WHICH IS REPRESENTED IN MANY MOVIES HE'S STARRED IN INCLUDING CALL ME BY YOUR NAME AND HIS MOST RECENT MARTY SUPREME,

~SOME WOULD ALSO SAY THAT TIMOTHEE WAS DESTINED TO BE A HOLLYWOOD ICON DUE TO HOW HE WAS RAISED AS HE WAS SURROUNDED BY PERFORMERS AND ENCOURAGED BY HIS FAMILY TO REACH HIS FULL POTENTIAL.





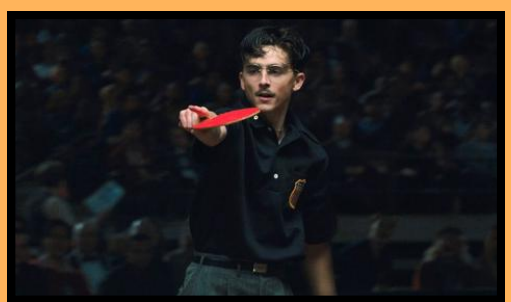


MAJOR SUCCESSES-

~ IN MY OPINION TIMOTHEE HAD A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH IN THE 2017 CALL ME BY YOUR NAME WHICH IS MY PERSONAL FAVORITE MOVIE OF HIS,SO IF ANYONE NEEDS SOME AMAZING TIMOTHEE EDITS HMU BECAUSE ESPECIALLY CALL ME BY YOUR NAME AND BEAUTIFUL BOY HE GENUINELY REACHES A JACOB ELORDI IN SALTBURN TYPE OF MESMERISING AND FOR THIS HE BECAME THE YOUNGEST BEST ACTOR OSCAR NOMINEE IN DECADES AND WAS PRAISED FOR HIS EMOTIONAL DEPTH AND REALISM. OTHER MAJOR ROLES AND SUCCESSES OF HIS INCLUDE BEAUTIFUL BOY, LITTLE WOMEN, LADY BIRD, DUNE, WONKA AND MANY MORE AS TIMOTHEE IS KNOWN AND PRAISED FOR CHOOSING DIVERSE AND CHALLENGING ROLES.

~HIS MOST RECENT SUCCESS IN THE FILM MARTY SUPREME WON HIS FIRST GOLDEN GLOBE OF HIS CAREER AFTER SEVERAL PAST NOMINATIONS FOR BEST FACTORY IN A MOTION PICTURE MUSICAL OR COMEDY HE ALSO WON CRITICS CHOICE AWARDS FOR BEST FACTORY AND HAD BEEN NOMINATED FOR MULTIPLE OSCARS CONNECTED TO MARTY SUPREME. I BELIEVE THE CHOICE OF TIMOTHE TO PLAY MARTY IN THIS MOVIE WAS PERFECT AS THE ROLE RESONATES WITH HIM SO WELL AS SEEN IN PAST INTERVIEWS WERE HE OFTEN STATES HE IS IN PURSUIT OF GREATNESS AND WILL BE ONE OF THE GREATS. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT THE MARKETING CAMPAIGN FOR THIS MOVIE IS ONE OF THE GREATEST IN HISTORY WITH THE EXCESSIVE USE OF THE NEON ORANGE AND OF COURSE “MARTY SUPREME CHRISTMAS DAY”.





THE OFFICIAL RUN-DOWN OF THE CRUNCHYROLL ANIME AWARDS 2025

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT, ANIME STREAMING SERVICE "CRUNCHY ROLL" HAS RELEASED THEIR OFFICAL AWARDS FOR LAST YEAR, SO HERES A COMPLETE RUN DOWN OF ALL THE AWARDS

FILM OF THE YEAR - LOOK BACK
MUST PROTECT AT ALL COSTS CHARACTER - ANYA FORGER (SPY X FAMILY)
BEST MAIN CHARACTER- SUNG JINWOO (SOLO LEVELLING)
BEST SUPPORTING CHARACTER - FERN (FRIEREN: BEYOND'S JOURNEY'S END)
BEST VILLAIN - AKAZA (DEMON SLAYER)
BEST ACTION - SOLO LEVELING
BEST COMEDY - MASHLE: MAGIC AND MUSCLES
BEST DRAMA - FRIEREN: BEYOND'S JOURNEY'S END
BEST ROMANCE - BLUE BOX
BEST SLICE OF LIFE - MAKEINE: TOO MANY LOSING HEROINES !
BEST ISEKAI/ FANTASY - RE: ZERO - STARTING LIFE IN ANOTHER WORLD
BEST ORIGINAL ANIME - NINJA KAMUI
BEST SCORE - SOLO LEVELING
BEST NEW ANIME SERIES - SOLO LEVELING
BEST CONTINUING ANIME SERIES - DEMON SLAYER: KIMETSU NO YAIBA (HASHIRA TRAINING ARC)
BEST ANIMATION - DEMON SLAYER: KIMETSU NO YAIBA (HASHIRA TRAINING ARC)
BEST BACKGROUND ART - FRIEREN BEYONDS ENDS JOURNEY
BEST CHARACTER DESIGN - DANDADAN
BEST ANIME SONG - OTONOKE BY CREEPY NUTS (DANDADAN)
BEST OPENING SEQUENCE - OTONOKE BY CREEPY NUTS (DANDADAN)
BEST ENDING SEQUENCE - REQUEST BY KRAGE (SOLO LEVELING)
GLOBAL IMPACT AWARD - ATTACK ON TITAN
BEST DIRECTOR - KEIICHIRŌ SAITŌ (FRIEREN: BEYOND JOURNEY'S END)
BEST ANIME VOICE ARTIST PERFORMANCE (JAPANESE) - AOI YUKI (MAOMAO)
BEST ANIME VOICE ARTIST PERFORMANCE (ARABIC) - HIBA SNOBAR (ANYA FORGER)
BEST ANIME VOICE ARTIST PERFORMANCE (BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE) - CHARLES EMMANUEL (SUNG JINWOO)
BEST ANIME VOICE ARTIST PERFORMANCE (CASTILIAN SPANISH) - MASUMI MUTSUDA (SUNG JINWOO)
BEST ANIME VOICE ARTIST PERFORMANCE (ENGLISH) - ALEKS LE (SUNG JINWOO)
BEST ANIME VOICE ARTIST PERFORMANCE (FRENCH) - ADRIEN ANTOINE (KAFKA HIBANO)
BEST ANIME VOICE ARTIST PERFORMANCE (GERMAN) - DANIEL SCHLAUCH (MONKEY D.RUFFY)
BEST ANIME VOICE ARTIST PERFORMANCE (HINDI) - LOHIT SHARMA (SATORU GOJO)
BEST ANIMEVOICE ARTIST PERFORMANCE (ITALIAN) - ILARA PELLICONE (KYOMOTO)
BEST ANIME VOICE ARTIST PERFORMANCE (LATIN SPANISH) - MIGUEL ÁNGEL LEAL (EREN JAEGER)





PIXELS ON TH

an analysis of video ga

Video game cinema - a world that is plagued with c
notably fan service. Fan service can easily sway the
16% Tomatometer for FNAF2 should already be en
FNAF2, a peak movie, for leaning too much into fan
adaptations through a rigorous analysis, concluding
captivating and inviting new, fresh audiences. I w
accessibility, and p



SONIC

The Sonic film franchise is a masterclass in proper fan service. It is packed with deep-cut references for eager fans—ranging from the Sanic meme to nods to Snapcube's viral Eggman's Announcement —yet it presents them in a digestible way. The trilogy has grossed over $1 billion across three films, and rightfully so. It proves that you can reward the hardcore community without alienating the general public.

LOYALTY 9/10

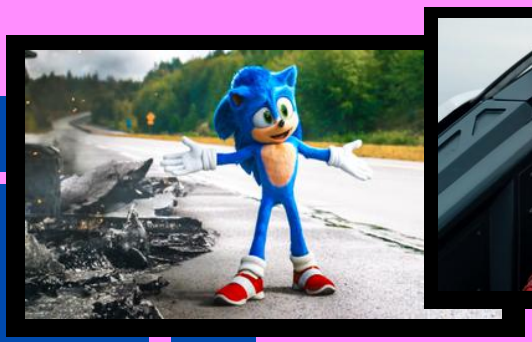
The franchise takes minimal creative liberties, staying remarkably accurate to the source material. Where it does innovate—such as Jim Carrey's unique take on Robotnik or the introduction of human characters like Wade Whipple and the Doughnut Lord —the new elements fit the narrative to a T. These additions don't distract from the fan service; they enhance it by creating a vibrant alternate universe where every reference feels earned.

ACCESSIBILITY 10/10

Sonic's fan service is incredibly inclusive. While there are plenty of Easter eggs for the eager fans, they rarely carry the weight of the entire plot. Because Sonic is such a globally recognisable icon, the average Joe Schmoe enjoys a high-quality viewing experience without knowing a single fragment of the Sonic lore.

PLOT RELEVANCE 7/10

Like many first entries, the original movie relied on a bit of key jingling — using a predictable road trip plot to deliver its references. However, as the franchise has progressed, the fan service has become essential to the story. We see this evolution in the Knuckles spin-off and the third film, where game-specific lore (like the Flames of Disaster) becomes a core driver of the stakes. However, I must point out that The Knuckles TV show was packed just as much with ads (like Knuckles crunching on a packet of Doritos) just as much as its jam packed with fan service. In the case of Doritos and Facebook marketplace, I'll let it slide. The first episode made it abundantly clear that Knuckels was a unserious cashgrab (I still loved it though - and that is my side tangent over)





SUPER

Grossing over $1.3 billion, the Super Mario Movie has cemented itself as the new titan of the video game adaptation market. Whether it's a frame-perfect recreation of Rainbow Road or Mario brawling with Donkey Kong using the Super Mario 3D Land Super Bell, this film packs a staggering quantity of references into a tight 92-minute runtime. While some critics dismissed it as a mess of fan service, I see it as a masterpiece that perfectly emulates the experience of playing the games. A round of Mario Kart 8 is never peaceful, and the movie successfully replicates that beautiful chaos.



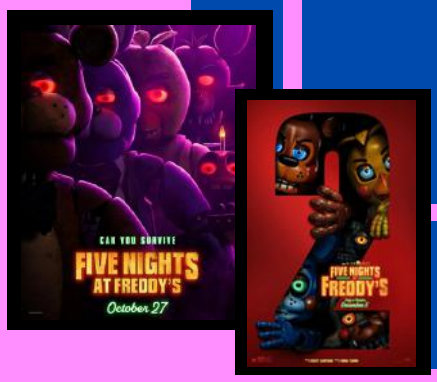
LOYALTY 10/10

Building on the chaos factor, the film is a perfect homage. It utilises an Isekai structure (transporting a protagonist to another world) that mirrors the player's own experience. You don't play Mario for a gritty, complex narrative with intertwined subplots; you play to escape the real world. By keeping the story simple—Bowser kidnapping Peach is a tale as old as time—the movie stays true to the franchise's DNA.

E BIG SCREEN

me movie adaptations

onfusing casting, odd worldbuilding and most
e reputation of a video game adaptation - the
ough evidence. But I am not here to debunk
service. I want to put my favourite video game
how, and if, fan service is applicable whilst still
vill be ranking them in three areas: loyalty,
lot relevance.



MARIO



ACCESSIBILITY 10/10

Mario is arguably the most accessible brand in history. Thanks to decades of classic gameplay and a recognisable world, the film requires zero homework. Even the signature voice—honoured through a clever Charles Martinet cameo—ensures that everyone from toddlers to grandparents feels at home. Those who don't find joy in this world are a small (and likely very bored) minority.

PLOT RELEVANCE 5/10

If Sonic 1 was key jingling, the Mario movie was jingling the entire Mach Bike. The plot is undeniably predictable and serves primarily as a clothesline to hang as many references on as possible. While the references are high quality, the narrative itself lacks the weight or character growth found in the Sonic sequels. As much as I love this movie, the fan service isn't just an addition; it's the entire engine, which forces a lower rating for actual narrative substance.

FNAF

The Five Nights at Freddy's movie franchise is currently on fan-fueled life support. The community is the only thing keeping the gears turning for FNAF 3 and beyond—a hole the creators arguably dug deeper with FNAF 2. While the first film sat at a 30% critic score, the sequel's 16% Tomatometer reflects a key failure: adopting a storyline that essentially requires a PhD in game lore. Entering this movie as a newcomer is like starting a Terraria playthrough without a wiki—you'll be confused, lost, and eventually overwhelmed.

LOYALTY 7/10

While the first instalment relied on incredible practical effects from Jim Henson's Creature Shop, the sequel turned the game accuracy up to eleven. Seeing Mike use the FNAF 2 Freddy mask to ward off the Withered animatronics was a peak moment for the community. However, Scott Cawthon is clearly using the films to rewrite the lore rather than retell it. With Vanessa (a Security Breach character) appearing early and Michael Afton and Mike Schmidt being treated as separate entities, the detour from the original game canon—while interesting—hinders a perfect loyalty score.

ACCESSIBILITY 3/10

I cannot let my bias hide the truth: a regular viewer had no clue what was happening in FNAF 2. While the debut movie did a decent job setting up a new timeline, the sequel flipped the pancake upside down. It is so reliant on Easter eggs to understand the plot that it scrambled any opportunity to appeal to a wider demographic. If you aren't already in the know, the movie isn't a horror experience—it's a confusing chore.

PLOT RELEVANCE 9/10

Unlike Mario, where the references are just background noise, the fan service in FNAF is the plot. The first movie's pace was a direct nod to the five nights mechanic, but the sequel literally contains sequences that mirror playing the FNAF 2 game. You cannot separate the service from the story because the script was written specifically to validate a decade of fan theories and YouTube documentaries. In this franchise, the Easter eggs aren't hidden; they are the main course.



FREE GUY



Where do I even start with Free Guy? Its genius as an adaptation of the video gaming experience is unparalleled. It is one of my most rewatched movies for a reason: it handles fan service in a way that is obvious yet general enough to be accessible to everyone. While there are nods to massive IPs like Star Wars and Marvel, they are presented as universal references that resonate with all viewers. From A-list celebrity cameos to level-up bars and mission prompts, this movie is only unenjoyable if you've been living under a rock.

LOYALTY 10/10

The filmmakers took extreme care to make this movie loyal to the actual gamer experience. Featuring cameos from DanTDM, Pokimane, and LazarBeam is an incredible homage to the community. Seeing LazarBeam on the big screen was a chicken jockey moment for me—rare, unexpected, and simply brilliant! The game Free City itself is a perfect stereotypical live-service shooter; the nods to Fortnite (the flossing, the llama pickaxe) feel like a genuine snapshot of modern gaming. Even the more obscure references, like the Portal gun, fit perfectly into the action without requiring you to have beaten the game to get the joke.



ACCESSIBILITY 11/10

The references in Free Guy are meaningful yet incredibly inclusive. The fan service blends into the narrative so seamlessly that it never alienates the non-gamer. Even if you don't spot a specific reference, the movie signals it as a nod so clearly that you still feel part of the experience. It manages to invite the audience in rather than shutting them out. Additionally, we must not forget the cameos of stars such as Chris Evans and Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson - they were crowd pleasers that were so easy to spot whilst being so rewarding at the same time.

PLOT RELEVANCE 11/10

Since the movie is about a game, this rating literally cannot be lower. It tackles the brutal reality of meeting development deadlines, the corporate greed of CEOs, and the struggle of indie devs. The plot isn't just about the code; it's about gaming culture—the fandoms, the streamers, and the fan fiction that carry games into the spotlight. It does gaming justice by showing that the world around the game is just as important as the game itself.

Wooh! That article was exhausting (just as much
that long, long tangent, I feel like I can say that
the viewing experience. Whether it be the be
gaming culture in Free Guy or showing Circus
make the movie more enjoyable. It is when the
audiences to the extent that FNAF

MINECRAFT

I have saved the best—or perhaps the weirdest—for last. A Minecraft Movie is a case study like no other. It wasn't just a one-off viewing; it was a cultural sensation that drew fans to theatres over and over again. The fan service undeniably worked, but not in the way director Jared Hess likely intended. While the quality was questionable at best, the fans pulled together a legendary (and chaotic) legacy, reportedly causing cinema employees to question their career choices over chicken jockey-related incidents. If the Mario movie was jingling keys, Minecraft was jingling a whole toolbox—and even that is an understatement.



LOYALTY 6/10

The movie took itself seriously, which was its first mistake. However, its failure to look like the game became its greatest strength. By being so ironically off, it stayed loyal to the chaotic, meme-heavy energy of the Minecraft community. It captured the modded experience—where things don't look right, but they sure are memorable. That said, the introduction of unnecessary new characters (the deuteragonists), mobs (Malgosha), and items (the tot launcher) hinders its loyalty. Players have built working computers inside the actual game; the fact that the directors thought Creative Mode wasn't enough content for a 101-minute film is baffling.

PLOT RELEVANCE 3/10

Let's be real: the fan service didn't just distract from the plot; it replaced it. People didn't go for the story of Steve; they went to throw popcorn and laugh at the uncanny-valley sheep. The fan service was made meaningful not by admiration, but by an irony more iron-y than Fe. To be brutally honest, there isn't really a plot to distract from. Between the constant Jack Black nouns—Diamond armour! Flint and steel! Pink house!—I completely forgot there was a story I was supposed to be invested in.

ACCESSIBILITY 10/10

It's Minecraft. It's the best-selling game of all time. You can walk into the theatre with zero knowledge and still understand the fan service because the brand is ubiquitous. The casting of Jack Black and Jason Momoa made the film digestible, even if Jack Black spent the entire time shouting nouns. The movie's tell, don't show nature was objectively poor filmmaking, but it made the experience so simple to follow that it practically guaranteed box-office success.



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Guinness World Records 2025

By Tilly C

The Guinness World Records first started as a book published in 1955, following a pub argument about the world's fastest bird. Since then, it has been nothing short of a beautifully random compilation of wins, showcasing how truly wonderful and genuinely odd the achievements of the human race can be. Here are, in no particular order, four of my complete favourite records of 2025:

Most Spoons Balanced On The Body

This list absolutely would not be complete without mentioning the three time winner of this record: Abolfazl Saber Mokhtari.

He first showed off his clearly fantastic spoon-balancing skill in 2021, when he won the record with 85 spoons. But things were clearly just getting started with Mr Mokhtari, as he came back to smash his own record again in 2023 by attaching 88 spoons to his body. And, he returned once more in the January of 2025 to set the scores with a total of 96 spoons.

I have no idea how this is possible but I'm impressed anyway.



Fastest Ten Metres Pushing A Skateboard By A Pig

Norbert, the internet's favourite skateboarding pig who has earned the nickname of Tony Pork, managed to push his board ten metres in just 11.32 seconds.

His owner, Vincent Baran, says this hog is "a natural on the board."

He is as worthy as any record holder will ever be.



Most Matches Held In The Nose

Martin Ströby set a new record, this year, by shoving a total of 81 matchsticks (across both nostrils) up his nose. Since he has an incredibly stretchy nose, fitting them in was the easy bit, and he said that the part he struggled with the most was stopping them from falling out.

The Swedish man says it was his children that encouraged him to attempt to break the record.





Most Golf Tees In Hair

There is of course, a recurring theme in my favourites, and that is people placing a large amount of random objects on their bodies. This next one is no different.

Anna Bannasch, with the help of two assistants, has managed to get 711 golf tees in her hair!

She was inspired by Joel Strasser, a multi-time World Record holder for placing-a-variety-of-objects-into-his-beard.

F1 NEWS



Following the tense end of the 2025 season, Lando Norris goes into Melbourne with a WDC with him. Max enters 2026 with a goal to earn back his title of the World Drivers Champion, but it won't be easy. Oscar Piastri also has that 2026 WDC in his sights, following a close competition in 2025 with the chance of the WDC just slipping away for him.

New kids on the block, Cadillac, begin 2026 with Bottas and Perez driving for the new team. But they're not the only new ones driving in 2026, as Arvid Lindblad takes the second racing bulls seats, along with his new teammate Liam Lawson, where Lindblad is replacing Isaac Hadjar during his move to Red Bull, where Hadjar takes Tsunoda's place.



With very few changes overall, this is what the 2026 lineup looks like:



F2 NEWS

Into a new year and a whole new lineup in F2 this year should bring a lot of questions. Can Invicta make it three years in a row that the reigning F3 champion wins F2? Can HiTech win their first ever F2 Constructors titles? Will AIX flop without Joshua Durksen? How will Indycar legend Colton Herta do?



Fe NEWS

Round 2 in Mexico City is not going to be one that Sebastian Buemi is not going to want to talk about. The Swiss set a brilliant pole lap just ahead of Taylor Barnard. He got a good start until he got to T1 and completely overshot the corner putting him in last. The lead changed a few times in the first few laps and Pascal Wehrlein moved up with an early attack mode until Nych de Vries pulled over bringing out the Full Course Yellow. To lap 25 and a very opportunistic move from Cassidy down at the hairpin pushed Antonio Felix da Costa into Maximilan Gunther clipping Dan Ticktum as well, da Costa and Ticktum boxed but both retired from the race. As more people took their Attack Modes, Nico Muller went wide and handed the lead to Mitch Evans on Lap 28. The last four laps were chaos at the front with Jake Dennis making contact with Eduardo Mortara, breaking the Britons front wing. With only two laps to go Mortara, Nick Cassidy, Dennis and Oliver Rowland were all within 1.5 seconds of each other with Barnard in the background ready to pick up the pieces, however it would be the master of energy, Nick Cassidy, who would take Citroen's first win in Formula E from eleventh. With that Cassidy would take the championship lead over Dennis, Rowland and Wehrlein.

After 5 laps under Safety car, Round 3 in Miami finally got underway. The top five shot off with early attack modes, soon becoming seven with both Jaguar as da Costa made an unnecessary chop over Muller as he took the lead into Turn 1. Unfortunately, Felipe Drugovich slid straight into the back of da Costa on the back stretch. But it would be the other Jaguar of Evans who would take the lead and win with an incredible 3 second gap and Joel Eriksson would clinch an amazing 5th. Cassidy still leads the championship from Wehrlein, Dennis, Rowland and Muller with Porsche leading Citroen and Mahindra in the Teams championship.