Oxford's DAILY INFO

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www.dailyinfo.co.uk
Issue No. 7604

Next issue: Thu 12th May
Deadline: 10am, Wed 11th May

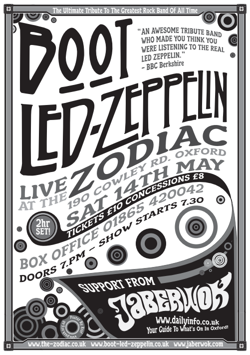
www.dailyinfo.co.uk

Tue 10th May - Wed 11th May 2005 (3rd Week)

WHAT'S ON/COMING SOON

Thames Vale Youth Orchestra Spring Concert
Weds 11th May, 7.30 pm, Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford
Arnold: Four Scottish Dances
Prokofiev: Lieutenant Kije Suite
Franck: Symphony in D Minor
Conductor: Michael Stinton
£9 adults, £5 concs. Accompanied children free.
Tickets on the door or tel. 01865 305305/ www.ticketsoxford.com

MODERN ART OXFORD
Artist in Conversation
Fiona Tan with Andrew Nairne
Wed 11 May, 6.30pm, £4(£3), FREE to Friends
30 Pembroke Street, Oxford, OX1 1BP, 01865 813800
www.modernartoxford.org.uk



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Thursday Night: 70s & 80s
Friday Night: Party Night
Resident DJ
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69 *MORE* on www.dailyinfo.co.uk

CINEMA
Until Thu 12th May

Phoenix Picture House (512526)

MARIA FULL OF GRACE [15] Tue-Thu: 1.30, 6.30pm,
Story of a 17-year old Columbian drug mule.

UNTOLD SCANDAL [18] Mon-Thu: 4.00, 8.45pm
Les Liaisons Dangereuses set in aristocratic 18th-century Korea.

THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY (PG) Daily: 1.45, 4.15, 6.45, 9.15pm
Life, the Universe & Everything.

Ozone Multiplex (0870 444 3030)

THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY (PG) daily: 1.40, 4.20, 6.40, 9.00pm;
Life, the Universe...

THE INTERPRETER (12A) daily: 3.20, 6.00, 8.45pm
Nicole Kidman & Senn Penn in FBI action thriller. First ever movie filmed in the UN.

THE AMITYVILLE HORROR [15] daily: 5.40, 7.40, 9.40pm
Haunted house horror. Remake of a film based on supposedly true story.

SAHARA [12A] daily: 1.10, 3.50, 6.20pm
Unabashedly old-fashioned action adventure.

MISS CONGENIALITY 2 - ARMED AND FABULOUS [12A] daily: 5.10pm,
Comedy sequel with Sandra Bullock.

GUESS WHO [12A] daily: 1.20, 3.30pm,
Bland remake of the 1967 classic *Guess Who's Coming To Dinner*.

DOWNFALL [15] daily: 2.00, 5.00, 8.15pm
The last days of the Third Reich, directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel.

WEDDING DATE [12A] daily: 3.10, 7.30, 9.30pm
Turgid rom com with Debra Messing.

HITCH [12A] daily: 2.45, 5.20, 8.00pm
Will Smith as a New York date doctor.

CURSED [15] daily: 9.10pm
Horror. Three LA youths mauled by werewolf hunt their attacker.

XXX²: THE NEXT LEVEL [12A] daily: 2.20, 4.40, 7.00, 9.20pm
Ice Cube replaces Vin Diesel in action sequel

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN [15] daily: 2.30, 5.30, 8.30pm
Orlando Bloom defends 12th-century Jerusalem.

Odeon Magdalen St (0871 2244 007)

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN [15] daily: 2.00, 5.15, 8.30pm
Orlando Bloom as blacksmith defending 12th-century Jerusalem.

GUESS WHO [12A] daily: 2.15, 6.30pm
Bland remake of the 1967 classic *Guess Who's Coming To Dinner*.

THE AMITYVILLE HORROR [15] daily: 4.30, 8.45pm
Haunted house horror. Remake of a film based on supposedly true story.

Odeon George St (0871 2244 007)

SENIOR SCREENING - VERA DRAKE [12A] Wed: 10.45am
Working Class life in 50s London.

THE INTERPRETER (12A) daily: 2.45, 5.30, 8.15pm
Kidman & Penn in FBI action thriller.

VALIANT [U] daily: 12.15pm
Animated WWII pigeon caper with Ewan McGregor.

ROBOTS [U] daily: 12.00pm
Kids' animation from the makers of *Ice Age*.

WEDDING DATE [12A] daily: 2.15, 7.00, 9.20pm
Turgid rom com with Debra Messing.

HITCH [12A] daily: 12.00, 4.30pm
Will Smith as a New York date doctor.

THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY (PG) daily: 1.30, 2.30, 4.00, 5.00, 6.30, 8.30, 9.00pm
Life, the Universe et al.

XXX²: THE NEXT LEVEL (12A) daily: 2.00, 4.15, 6.45, 9.15pm
Ice Cube replaces Vin Diesel in action sequel. Sam Jackson returns as Augustus Gibbons.

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN [15] daily: 1.15, 4.45, 8.00pm
Orlando Bloom as blacksmith defending 12th-century Jerusalem .

Ultimate Picture Palace (245288)

DOWNFALL Mon 7.30pm, Tue-Thu: 6.00, 9.00pm
Last days of the Third Reich, dir. Oliver Hirschbiegel.

review on www.dailyinfo.co.uk

THEATRICAL NEEDS

Reality TV auditions in Oxford on 24 June
All personality types required.
For further information email: info@theworldiswatching.tv

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WASHBURN MERCURY SERIES bass guitar, excellent tone, suitable for all styles. One loving owner - good condition, used but not abused. Reluctantly for sale at £350 ONO. jackceadel@hotmail.com for viewing/info.

GIGS

Tue 10th

LIVE ROCK MUSIC -KISS-ME-QUICK / Verbal Kink + Corporation:Blend + Formaldehyde / Kiss Bar / 8:30pm / Web: www.quickfixrecordings.co.uk / Kiss Bar
OPEN MIC / 8pm / Exeter Hall Pub. 1 Oxford Rd (corner of Cowley & Marsh Rds.); Tel: 01865 776431; Web: www.thex.co.uk
CHIARINA / Acoustic Jazz, Pop and Folk / Cafe Rouge / 8-10.30pm - FREE / Email: chiarina_darrah@hotmail.com / Web: www.chiarina.co.uk / Cafe Rouge - Little Clarendon St
JAZZ/SOUL GIG AT ABINGDON ARMS / Jaqui Hicks, Graham Harvey (from Incognito), Tim Dawes & Mike Bradley / blissfulmusic@clara.co.uk / Monthly / Email: blissfulmusic@clara.co.uk / Abingdon Arms Pub, Beckley nr. Headington
THE BAYS / with Richard Barbieri and David Torn. Peepshow DJs and VJs / Peepshow and OCM / Doors 7.30pm. £13.50 (£8) / Email: www.ocmevents.org / Web: www.thepeepshow.co.uk / The Zodiac. 190 Cowley Road; Tel: 420042; Web: www.the-zodiac.co.uk/
S OX BLUEGRASS/Old Time Jam / Bluegrass and Appalachian Old Time jam, singers and players welcome / Oxford Bluegrass/Appalachian / 8.30 p.m. for 9.00 p.m. FREE / Email: taube.marks@lang.ox.ac.uk / Cross Keys (pub), The Green, Wallingford

Wed 11th

CATWEAZLE CLUB / Oxford's acoustic performance space, for music, poetry, story and song, now in its eleventh magical year. £3.50/£2.50(performers/concs) / 8.30pm / Web: www.catweazleclub.org / Northgate Hall. St Michael's St
FAT SAM'S / Live funk and cheap cocktails. / Carte Blanche Promotions / 9pm - 2am £4 / £3 / The Studio Lounge
COROFIN & FRIENDS / Traditional folk / 8pm / Exeter Hall Pub. 1 Oxford Rd (corner of Cowley & Marsh Rds.); Tel: 01865 776431; Web: www.thex.co.uk
3SPIRITMUSIC PRESENTS/open mic / Welcoming all musicians and all audiences hosted by LILG and Ian / spiritmusic@hotmail.co.uk / £2; £1 with NUS, 8pm / The Old Tom pub, St Aldates
ACOUSTIC & BANDS SHOWCASE / Talent showcase from Oxford Brookes University... everyone welcome! / Brookes Rock Society / £3 entry, doors 8pm. / Email: obsurock@yahoo.co.uk / Web: www.alternativerocksociety.co.uk / Backroom @ The Bully. 162 Cowley Road; Tel: 244516; Fax: 202457
THE BEARD MUSEUM / With Film Noir, The Family Machine & Moocha / 8pm / £3.50/free with full beard / Web: www.beardmuseum.com / Purple Turtle. Frewin Court, off Cornmarket

THEATRE
Until Sat 14th May

Oxford Playhouse (305305)

THE WINTER'S TALE Tue 10th-Sat 14th ; Tue-Wed: 7.30pm, Thu & Sat, 2.30, 7.30pm, Fri: 8pm
A fairy story full of tragedy, comedy and mystery with a magical ending. £9-£22

Burton Taylor Theatre (305305)

FOUR NIGHTS IN KNARESBOROUGH Tue10th-Sat14th: 7.30pm
Premiere student production of portrayal of Thomas Becket's murderers. £5/£4

Old Fire Station Theatre (297170)

I WAS A RAT! Tue 10 - Sat 14; daily: 7pm (Sat matinée, 2.30pm)
An exciting new adaptation of Pullman's fairytale with a twist. £8.50 (6.50)

review on www.dailyinfo.co.uk

JOBS OFFERED

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST
position available from June 2005
The role will be to work in a busy reception. The individual must be enthusiastic and self motivated. Must have a confident telephone manner, be computer literate, numerate and keen and willing to learn. Some knowledge of hotel computerised systems and reception preferred.
For further details please contact Mrs James on 01865 248432 or e-mail your CV to marzenajames@aol.com
Royal Oxford Hotel, Park End Street Oxford, OX1 1HR

CLEANING/IRONING/OCCASIONAL BABYSITTING for 2 young kids. Preferably applicant has own car for errands like shopping. Flexible hours. Central North Oxford. References essential. Please email vanessa@vanessajones.net

PART-TIME RESEARCHER / ADMINISTRATOR required to work for the Beckley Foundation (www.beckleyfoundation.org). Good computing and writing skills essential. Knowledge of psychology/neuroscience, own transport and access to libraries preferred. Email CV to office@beckleyfoundation.org.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS is looking for a Personal Assistant and Team Secretary to join the English Language Teaching Division. The role is to provide PA support to the Business Operations Manager and Customer Service Manager, and administrative support to the Business Operations team. This is a varied and challenging role which would suit someone with the potential and interest to develop broader business experience. We are looking for someone with strong secretarial skills and an easy going and friendly manner able to respond to the unexpected in a positive way. You will need a high level of anticipatory skill and initiative in order to plan and organize to a high standard. This person is representing two busy senior managers and must be able to communicate clearly and confidently with all levels of OUP staff and customers alike. The salary offered will be in the region of £16,800-18,500pa depending on skills and experience. Further details are available on the OUP website www.oup.co.uk/recruit. To apply please send a covering letter, quoting reference number 05/153, CV and salary details to Emma Harte, Personnel Manager eltpersonnel.uk@oup.com.

MM OXFORD STUDY SERVICES is currently seeking qualified and experienced EFL Teachers and Social Activity Programme Co-ordinators for short-term summer contracts in Oxford during July and August. Knowledge of foreign languages and an active interest in sports an advantage. Some residential posts also available, as well as part time Social Activity positions. MM Oxford Study Services are also seeking a Japanese speaking Social Activity Leader during July and August either on a full or part time basis. Apply to: MMOSS, 44 Blenheim Drive, Oxford OX2 8DQ english@mmoxford.co.uk tel: 01865 513788

EMBASSY CES OXFORD social activity manager and leaders. Are you lively, flexible and full of common sense? Do you have excellent communication skills? EFL TEACHERS. Do you have the CELTA as a minimum? Temporary contracts over June, July & August. Accommodation available. Please send CV and letter detailing why YOU to jsouthby@studygroup.com Closing date for applications 13/05/05

QUAKER MEETING HOUSE Assistant Warden. Initially one year appointment from September 2005. Large, lively Meeting. Small, self-contained flat at much-reduced rent. Duties include residence and some evening and weekend sessions plus some admin work. Further information: oxfordpm@yahoo.co.uk Apply by 18 May to: Warden, Friends Meeting House, 43 St. Giles, Oxford OX1 3LW.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SERVICES
BODLEIAN LIBRARY: COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS
VISITOR SERVICES DESK ASSISTANTS
SENIOR SALES ASSISTANT: £5.91 per hour – FULL TIME 36.5 hours per week
SALES ASSISTANT: £5.68 per hour – PART-TIME
Looking for summer work? Interested in Heritage? Enjoy meeting and helping people?
The Bodleian Library is looking for enthusiastic team players to join our Visitor Services team through the summer months. The work will involve greeting visitors, providing information and selling our Bodleian audio and guided tours. Hours of work will be between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday on a flexible basis and some Saturday working. You will be numerate and literate, dependable and enjoy meeting people.
To apply please send CV and covering letter, stating your availability, to OULS Personnel Section, Osney One Building, Osney Mead, OX2 0EW, email: personnel@ouls.ox.ac.uk (Tel 01865 277171; fax 01865 202948) quoting reference: BL5029.
The closing date for applications: Saturday 14 May 2005. Interviews will be held in the week beginning 16 May.

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MEETINGS & LECTURES

Tue 10th

THE PRE-RAPHAELITES / 45 minute lunchtime gallery talk. / 1.15, £2, booking recommended on 278015. / Randolph Gallery, Room 1, Ashmolean Museum. Beaumont Street; Web: www.ashmol.ox.ac.uk/ash/education/
LECTURE BY MICHAEL GEARIN-TOSH / Surviving ten years beyond diagnosed multiple myeloma / Speedwell and Wellbeing Trust / Tuesday 10 May 7.30 p.m. £4 / Email: speedwellbeing@tiscali.co.uk / Green College. Woodstock Rd
SPIRITUAL HEALING / 6.30pm meditation, 7pm healing / entrance free, donations welcome / Friends' Meeting House. 43 St Giles; Tel: 01865 557373
OPEN MEDITATION GROUP / Practice your own type of silent meditation. Beginners welcome / Organiser: Ximena Duffell / 6pm Tuesdays. Donations. / Email: plcuf@yahoo.co.uk / Web: ocset.oc.funpic.org / OARC, East Oxford Community Centre (upstairs).

Wed 11th

APGRD - Gabriel Josipovici / Professor Gabriel Josipovici - 'The Use and Abuse of the Classics' / APGRD, Classics / 2.15pm - free - no ticket / Email: apgrd@classics.ox.ac.uk / Web: www.apgrd.ox.ac.uk/events/lectures04-05.htm / Headley Lecture Theatre, Ashmolean.. Ashmolean Museum, Beaumont St.
INTRODUCTION TO IMPRESSIONISM / 45 minute lunchtime gallery talk. / 1.15, £2, booking recommended on 278015. / Randolph Gallery, Room 1, Ashmolean Museum. Beaumont Street; Web: www.ashmol.ox.ac.uk/ash/education/
DAVID PATTERSON SEMINAR / Dr Sandra Debenedetti-Stow, Bar Ilan University: 'The Problem of Free Will and Divine Wisdom as a Link between Dante Alighieri and Medieval Jewish Thought'. / OCHJS / 8pm / Email: enquiries@ochjs.ac.uk / Yarnton Manor. Yarnton, Oxford OX5 1PY; Tel: 377946; Fax: 375079
DOUGLASS NORTH NOBEL LAUREATE / Lecture: New Approaches to Political Economy / Found. Law Justice & Society / 5.pm - free - no ticket / Examination Schools. High St
AGE CONCERN OXFORDSHIRE'S FORUM - OXFORD CITY / For older people & those who work with/care for them. Topic: Elder Abuse. / 2-3.30pm / West Oxford Community Centre. Botley Road
LECTURE BY GEORGE MONBIOT / Environmental Futures Series: What Environmental Future do we want? / Dept. Planning, Brookes Univ. / 5pm, free with refreshments / Email: fsigona@brookes.ac.uk / Web: www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/planning/monbiot/ / Lloyd Lecture Theatre, Oxford Brookes University. Gypsy Lane, Headington
ABINGDON GATHERING / Pub gathering open to members and anyone interested in Witchcraft / Children of Artemis / 8.30pm / Email: rain@wytchcraft.net rain@wytchcraft.net / Web: www.witchcraft.org / King's Head and Bell, East St Helen's St, Abingdon
SPIRITUAL HEALING / 6.30pm meditation, 7pm healing / entrance free, donations welcome / Friends' Meeting House. 43 St Giles; Tel: 01865 557373
GEORGE GOMORI / How to Split a Personality Creatively - reminiscenses and poems / Oxford Hungarian Society / Wednesday 11 May 8pm / Email: hungsoc@hungsoc.com / Web: www.hungsoc.com / Oriel College MacGregor Room
AGE CONCERN OXFORDSHIRE'S FORUM - OXFORD CITY / For older people & those who work with/care for them. Topic: Elder Abuse. / 2-3.30pm / West Oxford Community Centre. Botley Road

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EXHIBITIONS

THE ARTIST'S PAGE / Sketches and doodles by Tintoretto, Palma di Giovane, Inigo Jones and others / Christ Church Picture Gallery. Christ Church (entrance via Canterbury Gate / Oriel Square) Open: 1 Oct - 31 Mar: Mo-Sa, 10.30-1pm & 2-4.30; Su, 2-4.30. 1 Apr - 30 Sep: Mo-Sa, 10.30-5; Su, 2-5. Adults £2, concs £1 ; Tel: 276172; Fax: 202429; Web: www.chch.ox.ac.uk/gallery/index.html
AIMS: MENTAL HEALTH SURVIVORS / Exhibiting photography, paintings and sculpture. / Ark-T Centre, Crowell Road, / Monday - Friday 10am-3pm / Email: mail@ark-t.org / Ark-T Centre, Crowell Rd, Cowley, OX4 3LN
PAINTINGS & PRINTS BY ROS MORLEY / Paintings and Prints by artist Ros Morley, 'Colour & Atmosphere' / Wolfson College Arts/Music Soc / 10am-4pm / Free / Web: www.paintingforpleasure.com / Wolfson College. Linton Rd; Tel: 01865 274100
KATE KESSLING /NEW PAINTINGS / A mixed exhibition featuring Kate Kessling and other artists / www.modernartistsgallery.com / some Sundays -phone first / Email: info@modernartistsgallery.com / Web: www.modernartistsgallery.com / modern artists gallery whitchurch on thames oxon
FIONA TAN: COUNTENANCE / Film/photography installations. Collective memory and the constuction of identity through images. / Modern Art Oxford. 30 Pembroke Street. Opening times: Tues - Sat 10-5pm, Sun 12-5pm, closed Mon; Tel: 722733; Fax: 722573; Web: www.modernartoxford.org.uk
EVERYDAY MYTHS - WORKS BY JANE BUSH / Museum-inspired collage artist from London / Christ Church Picture Gallery. Christ Church (entrance via Canterbury Gate / Oriel Square) Open: 1 Oct - 31 Mar: Mo-Sa, 10.30-1pm & 2-4.30; Su, 2-4.30. 1 Apr - 30 Sep: Mo-Sa, 10.30-5; Su, 2-5. Adults £2, concs £1 ; Tel: 276172; Fax: 202429; Web: www.chch.ox.ac.uk/gallery/index.html
A NEW FLOWERING: 1000 YEARS OF BOTANICAL ART / Botanical art from medieval illuminated manuscripts to the renaissance of the last 30 years. / Ashmolean Museum. Beaumont Street. Opening times : Tue-Sat 10 - 5, Sun 12 - 5, Bank Hol Mons 10 - 5; Tel: 278000; Fax: 278018; Web: www.ashmol.ox.ac.uk
ARRIVALS: POLAND / Pawel Althamer & Artur Zmijewski present recent collaborative film & sculpture for the first time in the UK / Modern Art Oxford. 30 Pembroke Street. Opening times: Tues - Sat 10-5pm, Sun 12-5pm, closed Mon; Tel: 722733; Fax: 722573; Web: www.modernartoxford.org.uk
FU BAOSHI AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES / display of works by one of the leading painters of 20th Century China, marking the centenary of his birth / Room 13 / Ashmolean Museum. Beaumont Street. Opening times : Tue-Sat 10 - 5, Sun 12 - 5, Bank Hol Mons 10 - 5; Tel: 278000; Fax: 278018; Web: www.ashmol.ox.ac.uk
GARDEN WEAVINGS EXHIBITION / Turrill Sculpture Garden, Summertown Library, S'th Parade, Summertown. / Oxfordshire Basketmakers / Closed / Email: oxfordshirebasketmakers@basketmaker.net / Web: www.turrillsculpturegarden.org.uk / Turrill Sculpture Garden, Summertown Library, South Parade, Summertown
TITAN: A NEW WORLD EXPLORED / Exhibition on the Cassini–Huygens space mission. Accompanying lecture on 12 April - see Lectures, Seminars & Conferences / Web: www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/students/04to05/Titan/index.html / Museum of the History of Science . Old Ashmolean Building, Broad Street. 12-4 Tues-Sat.; Tel: 277280; Web: www.mhs.ox.ac.uk
WILFRED THESIGER'S IRAQ, 1949-1958: PHOTOGRAPHS OF TRAVEL / Over 4,500 photos taken in Iraq. / Pitt Rivers Museum. Parks Road. Open Mon-Sat 12.00-4.30pm, Sun 2pm-4.30pm. ; Tel: 270927 (info 270949); Fax: 270943; Email: prm@prm.ox.ac.uk; Web: www.prm.ox.ac.uk/
QU LEI LEI: EVERYONE'S LIFE IS AN EPIC / Contemporary artist's portraits of people from different countries. / Bank Holiday Mons 10 - 5 / Ashmolean Museum. Beaumont Street. Opening times : Tue-Sat 10 - 5, Sun 12 - 5, Bank Hol Mons 10 - 5; Tel: 278000; Fax: 278018; Web: www.ashmol.ox.ac.uk
'IF WISHES WERE HORSES' / An exhibition of paintings by Allan Lancaster / Vale and Downland Museum / 2.30pm- 5pm / Email: museum@wantage.com / Vale and Downland Museum, Wantage
+FOUR - PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW / Contemporary photography show by David Woolway and Emma Van Lindholm / david@shootmesenseless.com / open daily 9.00-5.30 / Email: david@shootmesenseless.com / The Gallery, St Edwards School, Summertown

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edmund.sturdy@gmail.com

HOUSES FOR SHARERS. Excellent sizes and locations. All gas/electric safety checked. Deposit held in protected account. Students welcome. NO AGENCY FEES. Call Dan 07786 627787

RIVERMEAD PARK, ABINGDON ROAD - Choice of 2, brand new 1 bedroom apartments within this new development. Suitable for single professional or couple. Fully Furnished. £725 pcm. Available June. Contact cowleyroad@scottfraser.co.uk or 01865 244666.

CENTRAL HEADINGTON 2 bed house. Spacious, sunny, quiet, fully furnished, parking. Suit n-s professionals. Convenient hospitals, Brookes, public transport. Available now. £850 pcm excl bills. 07913 604027.

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NO FEES!! - 4 bed & 5 bed house Iffley Road available September - oxford2005@hotmail.co.uk

2 BEDROOMED HOUSE, all mod cons, Lime Walk Central Headington, Oxford £920. no DHSS. 0831 841 297

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URGENTLY REQUIRED 2-4 bed homes/flats to £2000 PCM. 07770 391931.

HOTELS/GUEST HOUSES

VISIT www.all-rooms.com/oxfordshire/oxford/hotels.htm for a guide to Oxford hotels, guest houses & other accommodation.

ROOMS WANTED

TREATMENT ROOM TO HIRE for occasional, irregular use by nutrition therapist. 07976 230031

REVIEWERS

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THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
Douglas Adams - Dir. Alan J.W.Bell
NOW SHOWING AT THE PHOENIX, THE OZONE AND THE ODEON GEORGE STREET

The film is not very much like the book, but then the book wasn't very much like the radio series and the radio series was different to the TV series, so that's not exactly surprising. The basics of the story remain faithful to Douglas Adams' book – the Earth is destroyed by Vogons to make way for an interstellar bypass, Arthur Dent is rescued (in his pyjamas) by his friend Ford Prefect, who turns out to be not from Guildford but from Betelgeuse, they hitch a ride on the Vogon ship, get chucked into space and rescued under highly improbable circumstances by Trillian and Zaphod Beeblebrox- the two headed president of the galaxy who is looking for the ultimate question to life the universe and everything, the answer to which is 42. There are a few white mice, some dolphins and architect called Slaartibartfast. So far, so good.

In order to fit all this into a 1.5 hour story line with obligatory romantic angle, the Vogons' part is expanded and the chemistry between Arthur and Trillian is stepped up. On the whole, it works rather well. The bits set on Vogsphere are suitably silly and the ending is nice and tidy whilst being open ended enough for a sequel, if necessary.

Martin Freeman's Arthur Dent bumbles along in a state of befuddlement, (even if, for the sake of the ending, he takes to his hitchhiking lifestyle a little too well). Mos Def is a good, hyperactive Ford Prefect. Sam Rockwell's Zaphod is maddeningly hip, although the way his second head can only appear by flipping up from under his chin is a little distressing – he can't for example, have a proper argument with himself. Trillian is bright and capable and the Vogons are really disgusting (a cross between a mouldy carpet and Fungus the bogeyman). John Malkovich plays Hamma Kavula who gets to be a creepy villain as well as having a huge build up to a bad punchline. The star of the show is Marvin the Paranoid Android (voiced by Alan Rickman) who is maniacally depressed and completely hilarious. Fans of the BBC TV series should watch out for the original Marvin, who makes a cameo appearance.

It's no easy task to translate the intelligent and eccentric humour of the books into the big screen, especially as most of the jokes are in the narration. The film manages to capture the essence of it by using a lot of the original dialogue and having the book appear as a voice over (by Stephen Fry, of course). They even kept the thoughts of the whale and the bowl of petunias. It's a shame that Douglas Adams wasn't around to see the finished product. The brief glimpse of his likeness and the dedication at the end are a poignant testimony to his absence.

Unfortunately, this is a film that can't really win. Those who've read the books will be puzzled by the coherence of the plot; those who haven't will be puzzled by the lack of it. The special effects are good and there's at least 2 good cups of tea in it. Go see it. At least that way you'll know what people are talking about. And please do sit through the credits, or you'll miss the bit about how careless talk costs lives.

Jeev Mantotta 06/05/05

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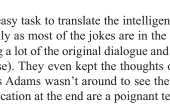

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