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Oxford's DAILY INFORMATION

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Next issue: Thursday 27th February
Deadline: 10am, Wednesday 26th February

Wednesday 26 FEBRUARY 2003 (6th Week)

COMING

GOD: A GUIDE FOR THE PERPLEXED. Author Keith Ward will be talking about his new book at Borders, 1-12, Magdalen Street, Oxford on Wednesday 26th February at 7pm. Free event. Tel. Borders on 01865 203 901 for further details



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CINEMA

Until Thurs 27th February

Odeon Magdalen Street
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THE HOURS (12A) Daily: 12.15, 3.00, 5.45, 8.30
Streep, Moore & Kidman star in film from the director of
Billy Elliot. See review at www.dailyinfo.co.uk
THE RING (15) Daily: 12.30, 3.30*, 6.15*, 9.00*
US remake of recent excellent far eastern horror.

Ultimate Picture Palace 245288
THE CONFORMIST (18) Wed & Thu: 9.15pm
A young Fascist must kill his professor...
THE ROARING TWENTIES (PG) Wed & Thu: 7.00pm
Cagney & Bogart

Phoenix Picture House 512526
THE HOURS (12A) Daily: 1.20, 3.50, 6.20, 8.50
Streep, Moore & Kidman star in film from the director of
Billy Elliot. See review at www.dailyinfo.co.uk

THE MAGDELENE SISTERS (15) Daily: 1.40, 4.10,
6.40, 9.10
Unrespectable girls kept as laundry slaves by Irish Catho-
lic church in 1960s. See review at www.dailyinfo.co.uk

Odeon George Street 0870 5050007
CHICAGO (12A) Daily: 2.15, 5.15, 8.00
Zellweger, Zeta-Jones & Gere do sex & violence,
1920s-style. See review at www.dailyinfo.co.uk

CATCH ME IF YOU CAN (12A) Daily: 1.30*, 5.00*, 8.15*
Hanks, DiCaprio, Walken & Sheen in true story of a
successful conman. See review at www.dailyinfo.co.uk

TWO WEEKS' NOTICE (12A) Daily: 12.45, 3.30,
6.15, 9.00
Sandra Bullock & Hugh Grant in 'stuffy-you, Boss!' flick
TREASURE PLANET (U) Daily: 12.15, 2.30, 4.45
Disney does Treasure Island in space.

DAREDEVIL (15) Daily: 12.00, 3.00, 5.45, 8.15
Justice is blind. So is Ben Affleck. See review at
www.dailyinfo.co.uk

8 MILE (15) Daily: 8.45
Eminem stars in biographical tale. See review at
www.dailyinfo.co.uk

PUNCH DRUNK LOVE (15) Daily: 6.30
Adam Sandler is violent eccentric in romantic comedy.
See review at www.dailyinfo.co.uk

FINAL DESTINATION 2 (15) Daily: 7.00, 9.15
(not Thu)
19-year-old must save friends from marauding Death.
See review at www.dailyinfo.co.uk

ODEON SENIOR SCREEN: ROAD TO PERDITION (15)
Wed: 10.45am. Over 55s only!
Tom Hanks in moving father/son mafia story. See review
at www.dailyinfo.co.uk

SPECIAL ADVANCE PREVIEW: ANALYZE THAT (15)
Thu: 9.15*
Crystal, De Niro & Kudrow return in sequel to 'Analyze
This'

* = Wheelchair access

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THEATRE

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Old Fire Station Theatre 297170
RETROSPECT Tue 25th - Sat 1st Daily: 7.30pm
plus Sat Mat: 2.30pm
Comedy/satire by Brian Mullin. OUDS New Writing
Finalist

Burton Taylor Theatre 305350
SPLITTING ANNA Tue 25th - Fri 31st: 7.30pm
Sat 1st: 5.30pm
OUDS New Writing Finalist

Oxford Playhouse 305305
THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES Mon 24th - Sat 1st
Mon-Thu: 7.30pm Fri & Sat: 8.30pm, 8.30pm
Worldwide Phenomenon inspired by interviews with
women. See review, right

Pegasus Theatre 722851
WILD GIRL, WILD BOY Thu 27th & Fri 28th:
1.30, 6.30pm
Is he real? For 7 year olds and up

The Apollo Oxford 0870 6063500
THE RAT PACK Mon 24th: 7.30pm
Musical show celebrating Ol' Blue Eyes, Sammy
Davis Jr & Dino Martino. £13.50-£17.50

Moser Theatre, Wadham
TOO MUCH THE SUN Tue 25th - Sat 1st
Tue - Fri: 7.00pm Sat: 12.00pm
OUDS New Writing Winner

THE FINE ART OF FALLING TO PIECES
Tue 25th - Sat 1st
Tue - Fri: 9.00pm Sat: 8.00pm
OUDS New Writing Finalist

O'Reilly Theatre, Keble
THE COLOUR OF JUSTICE Tue 25th - Fri 28th
Daily: 7pm
Based on the transcripts of the Stephen Lawrence
inquiry. Followed by 'Shades of Grey', a discussion
on race as an institution (with Imran Khan & Chris
Myant). Tickets from 305305

WHAT'S ON * ACCOMMODATION * JOBS



FILM REVIEW

The Ring
Odeon Magdalen St. until Thu. 27



Want to see a truly great horror
film about a videotape which brings
death to its viewers exactly seven
days after they watch it, and about
the desperate attempts of a young
mother to unravel the tape's myster-
ies before she, her son and her ex-
husband all succumb to its curse?
Then see Hideo Nakata's Japanese
ghost flick 'Ring', and fall under
its chilling spell.

Alternatively, you could see Gore
Verbinski's 'The Ring', a Hollywood
remake (if not quite a reimagining)
of Nakata's film. The lengthened
title says it all: what you have here
is essentially the same film, but
with the addition of some (mostly
unnecessary) detail. In the origi-
nal, there are hints that the young
boy and his father have psychi-
c abilities; in the remake, the father's
only ability is to look good while
being gormless, whereas the son's
prophetic powers have become far
more prominent. This proves to be
something of an irrelevant distraction:
a creepy bug-eyed kid receiv-
ing messages from the dead certainly
has its place, but that place is 'The
Sixth Sense', and it is about time
that Hollywood horror dared to jump
out from under that film's shadow.

Director Gore Verbinski has a first
name perfectly suited to horror, and
his direction is suitably slick and
visceral. Expect all sorts of subli-
minal flashes, hallucinatory dis-
tortions and moody settings; and
the videotape itself is a stream
of gritty, flickering images looking
like something from an early Buñuel
film, and every bit as unnerving.

GIGS

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Aldates

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Michael's St

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MEETINGS/LECTURES

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CURATOR & THE COLLECTION / Dr Oliver Impye:
'Japanese works of art: purchases from the Story
Fund'. £1.50. Tel. 278015 / 1.15pm / Ashmolean
Museum, Beaumont Street. Opening times: Tues-Sat
10am-5pm, Sun 2-5pm; Tel: 278000, Fax: 278018

THE BADMAEVS: TIBETAN MEDICINE IN RUSSIA
AND THE WEST / Martin Saxer (visual anthropology,
Zurich Uni.); film & research project on the arrival of
Tibetan medicine in the West / 5-6pm / ISCA, 61 Ban-
bury Road

SLADE LECTURE / Rembrandt's oeuvre: reduction &
expansion'. Prof. Ernst van de Wetering. Public lecture,
part of the 'Reconstructing Rembrandt' series. / 5pm /
Lecture Hall, Taylor Institution, St Giles', Oxford

DIGITAL PROJECTS IN OXFORD / Randolph Met-
calfe: 'My Humbug' / 1pm / Oxford University Comput-
ing Services, 13 Banbury Rd

DAVID PATTERSON SEMINAR: REFLECTIONS ON
EMANCIPATION / Prof. David Sorkin (Wisconsin Univ./
All Souls College). All welcome. Minibus departs Play-
house: 6.40pm / 7.45pm. Leaves Yarrton: 9.45pm /
Buffet from 7pm, lecture 8pm / Yarrton Manor, Yarr-
ton. Tel: 377946

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS / Weekly 12 Step meet-
ing for anyone with an eating disorder. / 7.30pm -
8.30pm / West Oxford Community Centre, Botley Rd.

OXFORD GEMELAN SOCIETY / Play the enchanting
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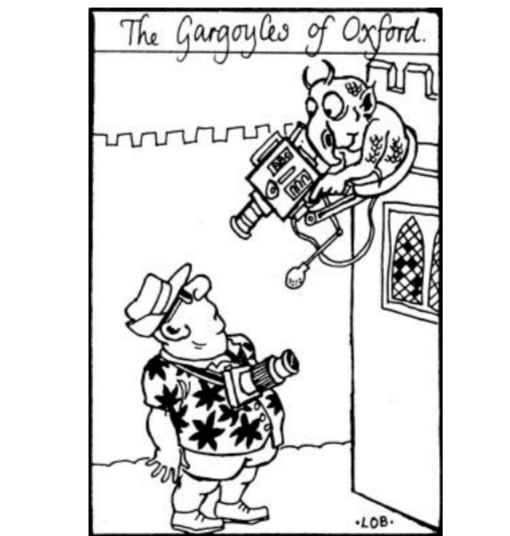
Verbinski is best known for creating
the Budweiser frogs, but 'The Ring'
shows that he also knows a thing or
two about how to wrangle flies.

Naomi Watts, who has played a woman
trapped in a nightmare once before
('Mulholland Drive'), is fine here
in the lead role, and her character
has been made somewhat more resource-
ful than in the original. The young,
long-haired girl at the centre of the
curse was the most terrifying
element of the original film, but
here, played by Daveigh Chase, she
looks more like the girl next door,
and it is only the soundtrack and
fast editing which make her scenes
seem even remotely scary. Brian Cox,
as the girl's father, puts in his
usual excellent performance, but his
part (another addition to the origi-
nal) is terribly written.

In fact all of the film's problems
stem from its rewritten script (by
Ehren Kruger), which proves to be an
inferior copy of Hiroshi Takahashi's
original. Everything that made the
Japanese 'Ring' find its way into
the darkest well of our fears - its
subtle suggestiveness, eerie obliqui-
ty and open-endedness - has here
been explained away, laid bare, and
tied together so completely that
we are left with little to do but
just sit there and admire the view.
In making everything so much more
explicit than its Japanese twin,
'The Ring' leaves less to the imagi-
nation - and that is where ghosts
really reside.

Not bad, but why see a film about a
killer video tape when you can see
the original on video?

Anton Bitel, 23.02.03



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THEATRE REVIEW

The Vagina Monologues
Oxford Playhouse until Sat. 1st



I'm a man. I don't have a vagina. And so
it was with some apprehension that I went
to see The Vagina Monologues (Playhouse,
until 1st March). Even though this show has
been around for seven years, originally per-
formed in New York, I had never seen it,
being somewhat intimidated by the title. I
guess I see myself as a kind of lazy-male-
pro-feminist-21st-Century nearly-new man.

Really, I don't know what I feared. It turns
out that demystifying the vagina is an enter-
taining, enlightening, and touching experi-
ence. For that is what Vagina Monologues
is about; three women dressed in black in
a deep red, sensual set, telling stories by
women and their vaginas.

That's two paragraphs, and already five
mentions of the word vagina. Yes, let's say
it: vagina, vagina, vagina! In the ninety min-
utes spent in the company of Rula Lenska,
Tilly Blackwood and Jenny Jules you will
hear this word, and many more alternatives,
more times than I expect you've ever heard
it in your life. You'll even be shouting possi-
bly the most taboo euphemisms yourself
during the show.

It's a wonderful experience - there is excite-
ment from hearing the frank discussions of
female sexuality; at once a mix of mild but
pleasant shock, a real empathy and happi-
ness at hearing mention of aspects of
womanhood that you possibly have never
shared before (clearly 'I' can't truly share
this empathy, but this is what my compan-
ions told me). There is also an empowering
sense in the show; one that makes you
wonder why on earth we don't talk this
freely about sexuality all the time. This is
a show by women, about women, but cer-
tainly not just for women.

The three stars of the show complement
each other. The maturity and deepness of
Rula Lenska plays off the liquid tones of
Jenny Jules and the playful joy of Tilly
Blackwood. The scripted banter between
the women flows well, and forms easy inter-
ludes between the monologues themselves;
these are the stories of women and their
vaginas from around the world. They vary
from the touching stories of elderly women
discovering their own sexuality, through the
tragic stories of teenagers in Bosnia, to
the exciting spectacle of triple orgasms. Not
something seen on the Playhouse stage
before, I would imagine.
In my mind the performance did more than
just entertain; after your initial reactions
to the monologues - mainly laughter, but
some intense sadness, and some anger -
you then question your own attitudes. This
is what makes the show so powerful for
men as for women. You will certainly be
entertained and enlightened by The Vagina
Monologues, and you will also be dwelling
on it for a good while afterwards.

Andy Cotgreave, 23.02.03

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