

TER's Picks For EIFF 2013 – Upstream Colour, The Bling Ring, And More



Emma Watson (2nd left) and her Bling Ring cohorts.

As always, the two weekends at EIFF are the busiest period, with almost twice as many films available to see as on the weekdays. Here are a few you might want to look out for when planning tomorrow's entertainment.

Upstream Colour

In 2004, filmmaker Shane Carruth burst onto the indie scene with his debut feature *Primer*, a puzzle-box of a movie about two engineers who accidentally create a time machine in their garage. Acclaimed as one of the most thought-provoking and, yes, realistic films about time travel ever made, *Primer* left audiences baffled, impressed, and eager to see what Carruth would do next. It has taken him nine years, but he has finally released his follow-up. And it is easily one of the most hypnotic and visually stunning films I have watched in a long time.

Ostensibly a science fiction movie, *Upstream Colour* (Cineworld, 6:55pm) is about a woman named Kris whose entire life changes when she is abducted by a thief and brainwashed into signing over everything she owns. After her release, she meets and bonds with a disgraced stockbroker who may have gone through the same ordeal. As these two damaged people get closer, they begin to piece together the details of what happened to them, only to discover that they aren't nearly as in control as they thought they were. To tell you any more about the story would be to do you a disservice. It is much

more rewarding to absorb the experience and to put the pieces together yourself afterwards.

As with his debut, Carruth wears many hats in the filmmaking process. He wrote, directed, photographed, edited, composed the music and takes the co-lead role of Jeff the stockbroker, alongside Amy Seimetz as Kris (herself a talented writer and director). The result is a film that is by turns dazzling, infuriating and mind-boggling, but never less than compelling. Be warned though, you may need to see it again next weekend before you can begin to make sense of it all.

The Bling Ring

I'm calling it now: this will be one of the most popular movies at the festival. Directed by Sofia Coppola and starring Emma "Hermione" Watson, *The Bling Ring* (Filmhouse, 8:30pm) is the somewhat true story of a group of high school friends in LA who passed their evenings by breaking into the homes of the celebrities they worshipped while they were out of town.

The film takes satirical aim at such things as modern celebrity culture and dubious home-schooling practices, but these are such easy targets that it often feels like shooting fish in a diamond-encrusted barrel. I have personally never understood the allure of the gossip pages. I just cannot wrap my head around the fascination the world has with people like Paris Hilton and Lindsay Lohan (and all the others whose names I have no interest in learning). In that way, I am maybe not the target audience for this film. While it had moments of humour and a handful of good performances – Leslie Mann being a definite standout as the mother of two of the girls – for me, *The Bling Ring* was ultimately as empty as one of their victim's shoe closets.

Harry Dean Stanton: Partly Fiction

This is a must-see if you are even half as much a film fanatic as I am. A portrait of one of the most talented and respected actors in Hollywood, *Partly Fiction* (Filmhouse, 10pm) features

contributions from David Lynch, Wim Wenders, Kris Kristofferson and more. The film is directed by Swiss documentarian Sophie Huber and photographed by EIFF patron Seamus McGarvey, with a soundtrack of songs mostly performed live by Stanton. Despite the wealth of stories being told, the songs give a much deeper look into the man himself. At one point he is asked for the greatest regret of his life and career, and Harry Dean replies that it was not pursuing music professionally. It is a crying shame indeed.

Some other picks for Saturday include *Fantastic Voyage* (Cineworld, 12:25pm), screening as part of a Richard Fleischer retrospective; the World Premiere of 1990-set British comedy *We Are The Freaks* (Cineworld, 9:10pm); and *The Complex* (Cineworld, 9:45pm), the latest horror from Hideo Nakata, director of *Ring*. All tickets can be bought online at [the festival website](#), or in person at either the Filmhouse or Cineworld EIFF box office.