

Edinburgh International Film Festival: TER's Recommendations



The return of the Edinburgh International Film Festival this morning signaled the arrival of fresh, exciting cinema on the capital's screens. New Artistic Director Mark Adams has helmed a dazzling programme; brimming with both playfulness and melancholy. The latest films from the likes of Amy Berg, Asif Kapadia and the geniuses over at Pixar seem to be hot on the lips of everyone here and are sure to pick up a great response following their screenings next month.

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Thus, here are our most promising picks of the festival's 69th edition.

The Legend of Barney Thomson (Dir. Robert Carlyle)

The festival kicks off with the directorial debut of one of Scotland's most beloved actors, Robert Carlyle. For his first outing, Carlyle has managed to rope in fellow screen talent Emma Thompson and Ray Winstone to tell this morbidly funny story of a Glaswegian barber turned serial killer. The film will have its World Premiere at the Festival Theatre on Wednesday June 17th.

45 Years (Dir. Andrew Haigh)

Arriving on Scottish shores following a hugely positive response at Berlinale in February, 45 Years sees the cinematic return of acclaimed Brit director Andrew Haigh. It looks at

the torn relationship a couple share as they fast approach their 45th wedding anniversary. Tom Courtenay and Charlotte Rampling nabbed both the acting prizes at the aforementioned fest; setting this up to become one of those beautiful British festival circuit discoveries. *Playing Friday 19th June at Odeon Lothian Road and Saturday 20th June at Cineworld Fountainpark*

Chicken (Dir. Joe Stephenson)

The directorial debut of young Joe Stephenson, *Chicken* is one of the festival's few rare Scottish premieres (the film had its UK premiere at Cineworld in Sheffield, the very same cinema Stephenson used to work in). A striking story of young Richard, an optimistic young boy with learning difficulties and his relationships; both familial and romantic. Richard Ayoade's female muse Yasmin Paige co-stars, and Charlie Lyne of *Beyond Clueless* serves as the film's editor. He spoke to us about the film back in January, you can read our conversation [here](#). *Playing Saturday June 27th at Cineworld Fountainpark*



Amy (Dir. Asif Kapadia)

Kapadia's return to the the screen is a bold, melancholic look at the life of pop/jazz artist Amy Winehouse. Depicting her career's finest moments and those we'd heard of but never seen, music documentaries rarely delve as deep as Kapadia did here. A non-fictional masterpiece by all accounts, we gave this five stars following its world premiere at Cannes. You can read our review [here](#). *Playing Thursday 18th and Friday 19th June at the Filmhouse*

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Dope (Dir. Rick Famuyiwa)

This film reeks of festival adoration and sweaty, frenetic teenage kicks. A big success at Sundance and the closing film

at Cannes' Director's Fortnight, it looks at the life and ambitions of three high school geeks and their attempts to escape their life in "The Bottoms". A coming of age story for the hip hop generation, a fairly unknown central cast is supported by the likes of Forrest Whitaker and the prince of modern rap music A\$AP Rocky. *Playing Thursday 25th and Friday 26th June at Cineworld Fountainpark*

Every Secret Thing/Prophet's Prey (Dir. Amy Berg)

Of the three films documentarian Amy Berg has churned out in the past year, two of them have found their place in the EIFF programme. Known for her uncompromising depictions of the world's most caustic and beguiling characters, she has turned to fiction to tell the story of a detectives investigation into child abductions, years after their occurrence. With a cast featuring Diane Lane and Elizabeth Banks and a script by Enough Said's Nicole Holofcener, all the signs are pointing towards Every Secret Thing being an impressive fictional debut. In the Documentary strand, Berg is in familiar territory with Prophet's Prey – her examination of the leader of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and the accusations against him of child sex abuse. An absorbing one, we're sure, but we're questioning the omission of Berg's controversial work An Open Secret. A film that looks at child sex abuse in LA's young star circuit, they're billing it as the film Hollywood doesn't want you to see. We're intrigued by the thought of a last minute Berg trilogy here. If any film festival is brazen enough to screen it, it would be Edinburgh. *Every Secret Thing plays on Friday 19th and Saturday 20th June at Cineworld Fountainpark. Prophet's Prey plays Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st June at Odeon Lothian Road.*

[tweet_box design="box_1"]"If any film festival is brazen enough to screen An Open Secret, it would be Edinburgh"[/tweet_box]

Last Days in the Desert (Dir. Rodrigo Garcia)

Scottish national treasure Ewan McGregor assumes the role of Jesus Christ in this biblical epic from Colombia's Rodrigo García. An imaginative look at his forty days of fasting and praying in the desert and his encounters with the devil, *Last Days in the Desert* looks set to be a big crowd-puller. It has a one off screening in the Festival Theatre on Sunday June 21st.



Inside Out (Dir. Pete Docter)

As expected, Disney/Pixar's colourful return to form has its pride of place in EIFF's animation lineup. A dazzling look into the personified imagination of a young girl, *Inside Out* is a gorgeous mix of humour and adventure with a touching philosophical flare. Pixar's best work in 5 years? We certainly think so. Read our five star review [here](#). *Playing Sunday 21st June at the Festival Theatre.*

Tickets can be purchased from the Festival Box Office at the Filmhouse, Lothian Road or online at the [Edinburgh Film Festival website](#).