

## Viewing the Winter Away

The long, weird, winter is coming to an end, and spring is finally in sight! Thank heavens there have been plenty of excuses to escape the cold and snow-rain-slush, to find shelter in the movie theatre!

I chose to review three very different films this time around, and I must admit I am generally very positive about them all! Being passionate about films, I realise I rarely have anything bad to say about them – but the three films I am taking a look at for this article are truly deserving of a standing ovation! Prepare for me to overload you with the obvious!

### ***The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey – Returning to a Dream***



The undisputed favourite film of every Tolkien fan this winter has been *The Hobbit*. Personally I saw it twice in rapid succession, and delighted in the little details noticed on the second viewing. It was well worth both the time and money to see it again, and just writing about it makes me long for the second instalment coming the 12<sup>th</sup> of December this year.

The film stays true to the book, and is really a perfect re-entry into the Tolkien universe of magic and adventure. Although there has been a lot of criticism on the fact that the book will be filmed and spread out over three instalments, I cannot do anything else but applaud this fact! Why would anyone frown upon the chance to escape into Middle Earth for another trilogy? Albeit that the pacing of the first film was slow at times, but any true Tolkien fan will never be bothered by that. Linger in the Shire was a pure pleasure, and the steady build-up towards the crescendo of action of the first instalment was, in my eyes, perfect! It replicated the book in a beautiful manner, which I think would have made Tolkien proud.



The dwarves are amazing! I must admit I am having a little -okay *major*-crush on Thorin Oakenshield! Could anyone be more badass than the dwarf prince? I think not! I was a bit nervous about how the dwarves would be portrayed, but I really think they came across excellently.



The only negative thing I can think of is how most cinemas decided to show the film in 3D only. I was super excited

when I heard that the film would be shown with higher than normal fps (frame rate), but got sorely disappointed when this was only possible in the 3D screenings. As a person who cannot see 3D films without severe headaches, this was a huge disappointment, and I hope they will change this for the other two films to come.

I am looking very much forward till December and *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug!*

### ***Django Unchained* – Biting Back Tarantino Style**



The newest Tarantino film! Need I say more? The amount of horrific gore and unexpected shocks are just as entertaining in this film as in all his other creations. Albeit the picture has received its fair share of criticism due to the subject matter, slavery in the American South, looking past the controversy awards the Tarantino fan with an experience of a lifetime!

I loved every minute of this film, and enjoyed how it was separated in three “chapters” of the storyline. The shock-effects and plot turns are very recognizable as Tarantino’s personal

style, and the humour is, as always, impeccably timed and refreshingly cynical.

It is actually one of the first times I have gone to the cinema in Zoetermeer and the room was packed! Usually one sees the sour-looking boyfriends at the chick-flicks, but this time it was the other way around. For me it was very entertaining to notice that the “why do we have to go see a stupid western film on datenight”-look on the ladies’ faces disappear as the film progressed.

The film breaks all western-stereotypes; the pace is fast and actionpacked. A huge highlight was the award winning Cristoph Waltz, who we love to hate in *Inglourious Basterds*. He performs amazingly in his supporting role as Dr. King Schultz. The only thing I found I was disappointed by was that Leonardo DiCaprio received so little recognition for his portrayal of the villain; he only won an NBR award. I found that he was a very convincing villain. Together with Samuel L. Jackson, he made movie history as one of the most unlikable villain duo ever!

### ***Silver Linings Playbook* – Romance from a Whole New Perspective**



The star from the booming success *The Hunger Games*, Jennifer

Lawrence, has more than earned her Oscar in this motion picture. This is the ultimate romance comedy of the season – with a twist!

The audience encounters a recovering mental-hospital patient, played by Bradley Cooper, who is trying to get back on his feet. We follow him through a series of twists and turns in his quest of recovering the life he had before – especially his wife.

The most interesting part of this film is the point of view from which the story is told. We get to see the world from a whole new perspective, and the emphasis lies on the fact that everyone is a little bit crazy – some more than others, but in essence no one is normal.

Robert De Niro plays the father, an OCD gambler, who surely is not making things better for anyone. Together with Jackie Weaver, they represent the parental unit of a dysfunctional, but very loving, family – inspiring laughter and compassion all over!

The movie is funny and romantic, and extremely immersive. It is one of the few films I have seen where I was completely focused on the plot and characters, to the point that I was truly feeling the same frustrations, achievements and sorrows of the main characters. It is also one of the films that really left me thinking, long after getting home.

I just have one thing to say: Excelsior!

### Waiting Patiently With Plenty of Distractions



If these films from the very end of 2012 foreshadow the greatness to come in 2013, I simply cannot wait! In the meantime I will have to busy myself until the new season of *Game of Thrones* is released, and it is coming really soon! I've bought both season 1 and 2 on BluRay, and I am re-reading and re-watching the whole series so that I can enjoy the new season to its fullest potential when it is finally released. In my opinion the HBO adaptation of the books is so good it bursts through all known star-rating scales!

Have a great spring, and do grant yourself a respite from your studies to see a film once in a while. In my opinion it is the best stress reliever on the market!

*Benny Baumann*