

yam

yetanothermagazine filmtvmusic

june 2009

the age of stupid
and the future of film
distribution

kiss in lima!!!
stick out your tongue
with a **rojo** report.

in this yam we review //
**star trek, x-men origins:
wolverine, terminator salvation,
the brothers bloom, up,
the sounds, shiina ringo,
green day, life on mars,
house m.d., portugirl
and more //**



asian invasions

in music, in films,
the asian
entertainment
industry is coming
to america//

Number four is really an unlucky number. I had nothing on my cover. Nothing!! Moreover, a lot of people either completely backed out (notice the lack of names in the contribution area) or took forever to send in their stuff, and I even had lost my own way.

Only Rojo seemed interested in making herself a name on this issue, but maybe that's because she was high on weed. She really should write more stuff (and watch better movies), but stop the weed-writing since it makes it almost impossible to edit.

This might seem like a very mainstream edition, but I managed to sneak something here and there.

I encourage you to send me your thoughts and contributions to amy@amy-wong.com

amywong //
p.s.: nate, your client really sucks.

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Coming up with new issues of **yam** is getting harder. I would tell you Nate sucks, but not as much. His client sucks, though. He backed out from the main article, so I was left blank.

the age of stupid

and the
future of film
distribution

pg2



'The Age of Stupid' is the new cinema documentary from the Director of 'McLibel' and the Producer of the Oscar-winning 'One Day In September'. This enormously ambitious dramadocumentary-animation hybrid stars Oscar-nominated Pete Postlethwaite as an old man living in the devastated world of 2055, watching "archive" footage from 2008 and asking: why didn't we stop climate change while we had the chance?

You are in charge of getting a venue, setting a ticket price, and making it a special night. The How-to Guide at the website tells you everything you need to know from advertising, checking your equipment, setting up Q&As, and gathering after-shows. That's all you need for a really cool film screening.

I had toyed with the idea of global (mostly digital) film distribution for some time, so the idea of Indie Screenings delights me... except for one tiny thing, and that's release dates. If we are indeed looking at the future of film distribution, why not get rid of regional and international release dates already? After all, big companies are doing world premiere events more often than years ago, in fact, all big franchise films are almost required to world premiere. So why not Indie Screenings?

If it is a thing with Spanner Films and The Age of Stupid, then independent (and foreign) cinema has gain a great ally in the battlefield of worldwide distribution.

Set to be released in September this year in the United States, the film opened in March in the UK. What is so important about this yet another environmental documentary? Sure, it was named Best Green Documentary by the Sheffield Awards and the Sunny Side of the Doc – they also even named the film as the Most Likely to Succeed Theatrically. However, what really stands out is the way Spanner Films has decided to try and distribute the film.

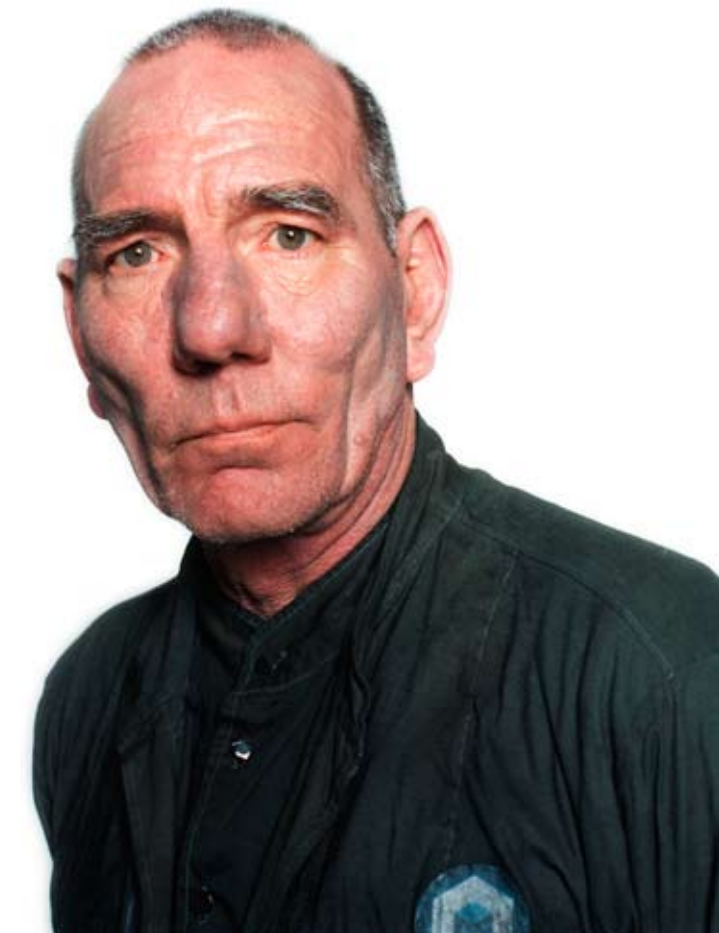
Indie Screenings.

IndieScreenings.net is a website that allows you to “hire” a film, show it, and keep the cash. But if you are on the other side of the business, it allows you to get the film you’ve made and let people around the world screen it.

The details are still a little bit murky, since they just launched for The Age of Stupid, but are planning to expand their independent film line-up in the coming months, which is something exciting for any independent (and any non-distributed) film lover.

As an example, you can book The Age of Stupid (after September for international showings) by getting a screening license from the website, and paying by credit card. The fee you’ll have to pay is calculated by the Indie Screenings software according to who you are, where you plan to screen, how many people will watch, and other factors. Three days before your screening date, you will get a high-quality screening DVD. This disc must be returned a few days after your show... if you lose it, there’s a fine.

That's it!





x-men origins: wolverine

Wolverine received a sudden resurrected popularity thanks to the latest X-Men trilogy, so Marvel decided to give us the quite anticipated (and first on a series of) X-Men Origins centered, this time, on this temperamental hero.

What can go wrong? We have a dark moody claw-yielding mutant played by sexiest man alive Hugh Jackman, who happens to appear in much of the film with very little clothing or quite naked with some smart camera ‘shots’, but the story brings little logic to the table and we are left with a

huge “so that’s it?” ready to be blurted out after the film is over and done for.

Sure, effects are okay... nothing less is expected from an action-packed movie nowadays. Action, check. Explosions, check. Matrix-esque camera movements, check. Pretty people, check. Obligatory sex/love-making scene, check.

And don’t get me started on Gambit. I was... disappointed on him. I was a Gambit fangirl when I was little.

I wish someone had shot an Adamantium bullet through my head, so I wouldn’t be able to keep these memories through my life.- amy

★★½☆☆



terminator salvation

One can be quite skeptical when hearing the name (is that even a name?) McG at the helm of a movie. After all, he did direct those Charlie’s Angels movies. So when names like Bale, Bonham Carter, and even Bryce Dallas Howard started dropping, I felt like I could give this a chance.

When I got the chance to see the trailers, I go really excited because they looked pretty good and exciting, but perhaps I should trust my instinct and not watch previews anymore. I always end up disappointed with movies I get excited about that way. I should know, trailer-making is a field in itself, so I shouldn’t be surprised when one of those pieces is better than the film itself. I should know better.

It’s not like Terminator Salvation sucks, it doesn’t. It’s just not that good. Worse of all, I wanted it to be good. The first half of the film did nothing for me, as did the participation of Dallas Howard and Bloodgood. What I did like? Worthington. He was quite interesting, but his sort of big reveal was on the trailer and in the end the whole thing was too predictable.

I did get a good laugh with Ah-nold, though. A little recognition from Connor would’ve been good. - amy

★★★☆☆

star trek

Star Trek (2009) is a great action movie worth seeing for it's humour and smartass dialogue. In fact, the best parts of this Star Trek movie were all the parts that weren't Star Trek insofar as it was actually a movie and not another boring T.V. episode.

The idea of Star Trek in of itself is fine... sci-fi morality plays making commentary on the social issues of the day. Such analysis and parsing of today's issues in T.V., or any other media, deserves the time and depth needed to address such things. Episodic television is a great forum to look at these things. If the Star Trek franchise ACTUALLY did this in the last ten years, it wouldn't have looked like your mom's best friend pole dancing to prove she's "still got it."

You have two hours to comprehend and enjoy what's happening on screen and don't want to spend it listening to the Prime Directive and the repercussions of giving AK-47s to cavemen. In fact, you want to see cavemen with AK-47s. Phasers on stun is for sissies.

That being said, this latest movie feels very fresh for an otherwise formulaic franchise, due largely to J.J. Abrams as a real movie maker. Previous movies suffered from the fact that they were made by the same producers and crew as the T.V. shows. As in, they were cheap. Really, really cheap and weighed down by years of staid writing. This new movie feels bigger, more polished and artfully shot.

Characters are shown in development, so you see what led to them becoming the archetypes we know as Kirk, Spock and McCoy. Kirk is a juvie, which explains why he's such an arrogant jerk in the original T.V. series. McCoy is bitter

and paranoid (I would've liked to see his more racist side) and Spock is incredibly repressed and crazy angry. As this is supposedly the first time we meet them, it's nice to see personalities develop as opposed to the cardboard cutouts we usually see in Star Trek. In fact, it was outrageous seeing Spock in the beginnings of an actual relationship with the one person Kirk couldn't get into bed.

Boring technobabble has been replaced with understandable english. Previous movies seemed to pad out minutes of running time by explaining resonate frequencies and coherent light forms. Star Trek penners often confused technical writing with smart writing.

One example of this is Captain Christopher Pike hailing the enemy; "This is Captain Christopher Pike of the U.S.S. Enterprise. Who are you? (chest all puffed out)".

Onscreen, you see the intimidating enemy, and think he's ready to announce his intentions to wipe out the Federation, how he'll do it and for what honourable yet malefic intentions; "Hi Christopher, I'm Nero."

Just one example of many of how this latest Star Trek movie defeats and elevates expectations at the same time. - nate

★★★★☆

the brothers bloom

The Brothers Bloom is a one of the funniest, most compelling movies I've seen this year.

The story chronicles the youthful delinquency and strange adulthood of Stephen and Bloom (who apparently has no first name) and brings us to the present day where the younger wants to leave the business.

Why? He wants to have a real life not scripted by Stephen, a literary inspired con man who does not have an event in their lives not scripted by himself. Bloom is depressed and longs to love and be loved without pretense or motive in some elaborate scheme. The elder convinces Bloom to pull one more heist, his modus operandi being, "the perfect con is the one where everyone gets what they want in the end".

The target is the heiress Penelope, an isolationist whose hobbies include... other people's hobbies. This has led her to become an eccentric polymath who has never dealt with any kind of real world situation, much less love. It makes her a vulnerable mark to Bloom's quiet charms.

In Stephen's elaborate scheme, Bloom convinces Penelope to engage in a round the world adventure to fill the con's pockets, but is that all Stephen has planned?

One of the most charming things about this movie is the infusion of smart dialogue and impossible situations in a story very much influenced by literary magical realism, moved along by utterly bizarre characters. It's a smart and

funny viewing that doesn't talk down to an audience; it may even bring you up a bit after brain dead fare such as Terminator Salvation. - nate

★★★★☆



tsumiki no ie

Tsumiki no Ie, or La Maison en Petits Cubes is a Japanese animated short, winner of a 2009 Academy Award. It was directed by Kunio Kato, who thanked the Robot Communications company “*domo arigatou mr. roboto*”.

The 12-minute short tells the story of an old man living in a town flooded by water. One day, he wakes up to realize the water level is rising, so he begins building on top of his house, brick after brick until he makes a place almost exactly the same as the one he’s got... only smaller.

The old man moves his things one floor up, and is about to finish moving his furniture, when he accidentally drops his pipe into the water. He thinks he can replace it, but as soon as he realizes there’s no other pipe for him - he sees a diving suit, so he does the same thing everyone would do in his situation... get the diving kit, and get the underwater pipe.

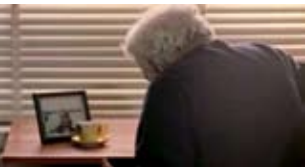
Underwater he recovers his dear pipe, and uncovers forgotten memories of his wife, children, and his own childhood, all told through his journey to the bottom of the ocean where once was a town with trees.

Some people may see this as a subtle commentary on global warming, and what-not, but in reality, what makes Tsumiki no Ie so great is everything else. The animation done in classic 2d, with less than perfect coloring gives it textures and a great mood that mixes so well with an excellent soundtrack by Kenji Kondo.

There’s also a rumor saying that there’s another version with narration by Japanese actress Masami Nagasawa, but frankly - I don’t give a damn. This short doesn’t need words to show us any more depth than it already has.



short films



tea date

Tea Date is an American/Korean short film starring Mark Barkan and Doona Bae, as an English teacher and his Korean student.

The 21-minute film begins as Mr. Ed wakes up one morning, he washes his face and pays a lot of attention to every little detail in his physical appearance. He’s waiting for someone, as he’s boiling water for tea and even making a cake.

The bell rings, and suddenly my screen is brighter. Doona Bae enters as Sunhee, the big-doe-eyed (to Asian standard) Korean student at Mr. Ed’s English class. She’s early, and Mr. Ed is not ready just yet. He opens the door, so Sunhee invites herself in. She looks around the place and comments with that adorable Korean-English accent “*your place’s very nice, Mr. Ed*”.

Get your mind of the gutter. This is not that kind of film. This is the story of a man who’s lost his wife, and is finally trying to move on, and finding a friend to help him through.

Despite, Mr. Ed being the main character in this short, it’s all about Sunhee for me... Doona Bae just lights up your screen whenever she’s on with her quirkyness, be it in her Japanese lead in Linda Linda Linda, or in the Korean film The Host... so be sure to check her out in Hirokazu Koreeda’s Air Doll, where she will play a blowup doll come to life.



up

Pixar's done it again! After all the fuzz on whether or not an old man could be a marketable character, it's kind of nice to see that you don't need to be young to be the star of an animated film. Yes, Mr. Fredricksen seems a bit grumpy at first glance, but turns out to be quite the nice grandpa... and husband. In fact, I loved his relationship with Ellie, which Pixar managed to developed so efficiently and in such a beautiful way. Yeah, the first few minutes of the film are genius... and yeah, I did cry.

Despite that, and all the funny that I might be able to find here though – *I'm looking at you, Kevin* – there were indeed moments when I couldn't buy it. I know, it's an animated film... anything can happen, but part of that magic is making me fully believe that it *could*.

One of the best films of the year so far... and best animated film! It does not matter that Ponyo (in the Cliff by the Sea) is coming out soon. - amy

★★★★☆

the year the asian chinese, japanese, korean & more...

“There seems to be an Asian storm coming. Now with the MTV Asian-centric MTV Iggy, and the success of films like Tokyo Sonata at Cannes Film Festival, Departures (and Indian-themed Slumdog) at the Academy Awards, and even the first Asian-American Pixar character! There is a lot of Asia coming our way.”

pg10



It was always like this. The Chinese math-geek or science-buff, the martial artist or the exotic Asian beauty. It was lucky if they cast the right Asian to play the part... or if they even cast an Asian to play the part. It's true, there has never been enough Asian representation on the entertainment industry on this side of the world... after all, Bruce Lee was *too* Asian to be on Kung Fu. And we also decided to make the American-adaptation of the *Super Sentai* series.

However, things have changed. Who would have thought 20 years ago that China would get to where it is now, that non-Chinese-schools would begin being interested in teaching Chinese lessons, or that I would even think of going to study there. White kids watching anime, and Latin American girls swooning over Korean boy bands, even though they probably can't tell they are *not* Japanese.

The Asian entertainment industry is buzzing with everyone working and marketing themselves in different countries in the region despite language, and now trying to make it big in the US. Several Korean pop acts – including BoA, Se7en, and the Wondergirls – have their eyes set on this market, and the number of artists will only increase in time. But musicians aren't the only ones making it big, there has also been a huge increase on promotion for Asian films with US (and international) distribution like Red Cliff [Magnet Releasing], Death Note [Viz Pictures], Departures [Regent Releasing], Tokyo Sonata [Regent Releasing], Astro Boy [Summit Entertainment], True Legend [Focus Features], The Warrior and the Wolf [Focus Features] and Blood: The Last Vampire [Focus Features]. That is more than we've seen in a couple of years.

Moreover, the Shanghai International Film Festival, as well as the Tokyo International Film Festival are emerging as A-List festivals with the presence of Academy Award winner Danny Boyle (as jury at SIFF), and Academy Award nominee Clive Owen. Add to that the Asian Film Awards, which is set



to be market as the Academy Award of the Asian region... but only time will tell.

What have we got to look forward to? More distribution of Asian films, hopefully more of the good ones, as well as an increase of over-the-top quality pop music videos, which



have been lacking in America - you have to give props to Asian musical groups for actually caring about choreography and editing in their music videos. And a whole bunch of Asian new idols and artistes. After all, Asian entertainment is not only for *otakus* anymore...





maca's ★tings

- The Accidental Husband★★★★½☆
- Angels & Demons★★★★☆
- X-Men Origins: Wolverine★★★★☆
- Duplicity★★★★½☆
- Tsumiki no ie (La Maison en Petits Cubes)★★★★☆
- This Way Up★★★★☆
- Oktapodi★★★★½☆
- Lavatory Lovestory★★★★½☆

amy's ★tings

- Monsters vs. Aliens★★½☆☆
- Duplicity★★★★☆
- Last Chance Harvey★★★★¼☆
- Der Baader Meinhof Komplex (The Baader Meinhof Complex)★★★★☆
- Tsumiki no ie (La Maison en Petits Cubes)★★★★½
- Be like Others★★★★½☆
- State of Play★★★★¼☆
- Sin Nombre★★★★¼☆
- Toronto Stories★★★★½☆
- Tokyo!★★★★½☆

- Entre les Murs (The Class)★★★★☆
- I Love Sarah Jane★★★★¾☆
- Star Trek★★★★☆
- Aoki Okami: Chi Hate Umi Tsukiru Made (The Blue Wolf: To the Ends of the Earth and Sea)★★½☆☆
- Angels & Demons★★☆☆☆
- Happy Flight★★★★☆
- The Young Victoria★★★★½☆
- Susuz Yaz (Dry Summer)★★★★½☆
- Hanyo (The Housemaid)★★★★¾☆
- Aruitemo, Aruitemo (Still Walking)★★★★☆

coming soon

in theaters

- June
 - Whatever Works (19th)
 - Chéri (26th)
 - Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen
 - My Sister's Keeper
 - The Stoning of Soraya M.

August
 - Julie&Julia (7th)
 - G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra
 - Gake no Ue no PONYO (Ponyo) (14th)
 - The Time Traveler's Wife
- July
 - Public Enemies (3rd)
 - Brüno (10th)
 - Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince (17th)



on dvd/blu-ray

- June
 - The Seventh Seal (16th) [DVD] [Blu-ray]
 - Dr. Strangelove [Blu-ray]
 - Bergman Island [DVD]
 - Cherry Blossoms [DVD]
 - Waltz with Bashir (23rd) [DVD] [Blu-ray]

- Origin: Spirits of the Past [Blu-ray]

- Phoebe in Wonderland [DVD]

- Mancora [DVD]

- Two Lovers (30th) [DVD] [Blu-ray]

- Tokyo! [DVD] [Blu-ray]
- July
 - HBO's Grey Gardens (14th) [DVD]
 - Ningen no Joken (The Human Condition) [DVD]
 - Coraline (21st) [DVD] [Blu-ray]
 - HBO's The Alzheimer's Project (28th) [DVD]



kiss me... kiss

The place? The “Estadio Nacional”. The People? The Kiss Army. The time? Nine o'clock. My friend “Puppy” was with me, and we were waiting for what I believe was one of the best shows ever presented in Lima. Kiss was going to play that night!

There was a lot of people, all different ones... young people waiting to see if the band was as good as their parents had said. Old people with their eyes filled with joy – one of them said he'd never thought he'd ever see them. He'd waited 30 years to see them live. Despite that, the concert was not completely sold out. I could easily spot empty seats around, but Puppy gave me the answer. Iron Maiden gave a concert

just a few weeks prior to this event, which had fewer weeks of promotion and was also a bit pricier.

We were really excited and counted the minutes to the show, and the cans of beer we had brought like any soldier of the Kiss Army. I was ready for everything. I even had a pack of tissues and my inhaler... you know, just in case. I was 100% ready to rock and roll all night.

Lights off, and everyone went nuts. The lights lit the stage up, and Paul Stanley's familiar voice broke the ice “Buenas noches, Lima. Esta noche es la noche.” [Good evening, Lima. Tonight's the night.] - They began with “Deuce,”

jumping up and down as we started singing along. However, I was taken off this experience when I realized people weren't immersed into this like I was a minute before. In fact, it was horrible seeing everyone taking pictures and recording EVERYTHING.

Overall, the concert was great... at least for me. Peruvian fans got far more than what we had hoped for. Fireworks, music and the vibe around us. It was probably the hottest night in Lima. I hope they come back soon... 'cuz “I can't get enough of you, baby...” - olga rojo c.



the sounds

Crossing the Rubicon (Jun. 2 2009)

Perhaps Crossing the Rubicon – which refers to the point of no return – is like my previous The Sounds' albums. I liked them at first, but loved them eventually. The first single, No One Sleeps When I'm Awake, is a good attempt at pulling me back in as a fan, but seems to lack the energy from previous singles.

However, 4 Songs & a Fight seems to recapture that vibe and gets you to crank

up the volume. I just love Maja's voice in the verses of My Lover, and saying things like “*I know you wanna be my lover*”. Followed that up with Dorchester Hotel's beat, and I'm totally sold on this album.

Highlights? My Lover, Dorchester Hotel, Beatbox, Underground.

★★★¾☆



shiina ringo

Ariamaru Tomi Single (May 27 2009)

This single was released 11 years after her debut single! It translates to Superfluous Fortune or Excessive Wealth and it's also the main theme to the TBS show Smile.

Ariamaru is a nearly-two-minute track that starts off as an acoustic jam with Ringo's characteristic voice, which certainly gives it a rock vibe in the end. A lot of people like it, but it certainly doesn't fully display Ringo's musical genius.

The second track, SG ~ Superficial Gossip ~, actually gives the English name to her soon-to-be-out studio album, *Sanmon GOSHIPPU*. The track is much more interesting as it combines electronic with rock and a certain French/Argentinean cafe bar vibe. I can't wait for it any longer!

★★★¾☆

green day

21st Century Breakdown
(May 15 2009)

I was one of those who enjoyed American Idiot as an album on the first listen, so I was excited about the idea behind 21st Century Breakdown, however, I don't think it's that great. For starters, I feel like I can listen to single tracks of the album, and discard the ones I don't like.



The album has good intentions of Rock Opera, sure, but the 18 tracks fail to grasp your attention throughout, and lets you wander off to do other things in your mundane life. Yeah, this is just an album to pass the time.

Highlights? ¡Viva la Gloria!, Before the Lobotomy, Christian's Inferno, Peacemaker, and ¿Viva la Gloria?
- amy

★★★½☆

ss501

U R Man – Special Album
(Nov. 21 2008)



Just after dropping two of its members does SS501 manage to deliver a mini album that is sexy and decent.

Released in connection to the Boys over Flowers drama where one of their members was a main cast; this album delivers a mature and sexy style kepping the pop flavour that SS501 is known for. The speciality of this album, besides that they kept the only good singers, is that is a bit sexier. The videos showed more skin and the feel was “bad boys”. 6 tracks that consist of sound that is new to SS501, something they should keep for the future.
- jumi

★★★★☆

sue's albums

Ciara - Fantasy Ride	★★★★☆
Crystal Method - Divided by Night	★★½☆☆
Depeche Mode - Sounds of the Universe	★★¾☆☆
Jolin Tsai - Butterfly	★★★★¾
Lady Sovereign - Jigsaw	★★★★☆
Living Things - Habeas Corpus	★★★¼☆
Peaches - I Feel Cream	★★★½☆
Starsailor - All the Plans	★¾☆☆☆
Tori Amos - Abnormally Attracted to Sin	★★½☆☆
Coconut Records - Davy	★★★★¼
Miniature Tigers - Tell it to the Volcano	★★★★½
White Lies - To Lose my Life	★★★★☆
Does it Offend You, Yeah - You Have No Idea	
What You're Getting Yourself Into	★★★★½



more albums

Phoenix - Wolfgang Amadeus Phoenix	★★★½☆
Rascal Flatts - Unstoppable	★★¾☆☆
Keith Urban - Defying Gravity	★★★★☆
La Patère Rose - La Patère Rose	★★★★☆
Emily Loizeau - Pays Sauvage	★★★¼☆
La 5ta Estacion - Sin Frenos	★★★★☆
St. Vincent - Actor	★★★½☆
Bill Callahan - Sometimes I Wish We	
Were an Eagle	★★★★¾
Dirty Projectors - Bitte Orca	★★★★☆
Melissa McClelland - Victoria Day	★★★½☆
Coeur de Pirate - Coeur de Pirate	★★★★☆
3 Gars su'l Sofa - Cerf-volant	★★★☆☆
Eminem - Relapse	★★★☆☆
Au Revoir Simone	★★★¼☆



snds

Gee
(Jan. 7 2009)

The nine-girl group's comeback releases a wave of dance mania not seen since Wondergirl's “Tell Me”.



The mini-album consists of five tracks that vary in style and make your ears ache.

The first track of the album, which gives its name to the album, was the hugest hit in Korea during the first half of year. The coquette dance and the cute voices had everyone in the country and their mother singing and dancing.

The renaming of the album could had been good had they tried to stay in one direction. By trying to show of the girls versatile style, the album just becomes bothersome. - jumi

★★☆☆☆

2pm

Time for Change
(Apr. 23 2009)

After a small break from the music scene, the gymnasts of JYP follow the trend of the repeated chorus.



“Again & Again” starts off as one of the strongest comeback mini-album's of the year. It's a strong song mixed with heavy beats and fierce dance moves, it shows the direction 2PM takes.

The rest of the four songs are equally good and great to just sit down and listen to while you chill.

Consisting of 7 members the group takes advantage of that. Great vocals and stance all around. A great R&B album that measures up and stands out in the otherwise “cutesy” K-pop music scene. - jumi

★★★★★

shinee

Romeo
(May 21 2009)



The anticipated comeback from the noona-loving boygroup falls short seeing as they try to use an already overly-used style.

I was looking forward to this comeback. After the single “A.Mi.Go”, SHINee seemed to be on the track of maturity. Sadly the single “Juliette” from this mini-album reminds me of their old single “Love like Oxygen”.

Nothing really stands out in this album, it is like a bad sequel to their first. All they tried to do this time around was to wear weirder clothes so that they seem cooler. Fail! - jumi

★★½☆☆

coming soon

June 16th	Wilco - Wilco
Queen - Live in Ukraine	Brad Paisley - American Saturday
Jill Scott - The No. 1 Lady	Night
Remixed	Moby - Wait for Me

June 17th	July 1st
Polysics - Oh! Oh!	DBSK - Stand by U

June 23rd	July 7th
Regina Spektor - Far	Queen Latifah - Persona
Pete Yorn - Back and Fourth	
Bjork - Voltaic	July 14th
Sunset Rubdown - Dragonslayer	Pearl Jam - The Lowdown

June 24th	July 21st
Shiina Ringo - Sanmon GOSHIPPU (Superficial Gossip)	Lil Wayne - Rebirth
Big Bang - My Heaven	August 3rd

June 30th	Imogen Heap - Ellipse
Rob Thomas - Cradlesong	Aimee Allen - A Little Happiness



life on mars

★★★★★

Life on Mars (BBC 1 2006-2007) was a brilliant show whose writers understood that great stories have a beginning, middle and definitive end. Most shows, especially those produced Stateside, tend to have such popular followings and continuous revenue streams that a show no longer becomes about the story so much as a franchise. That results in staid writing that struggles to lend any meaningful character development and retreads of previous ideas. Those that don't enjoy such popularity aspire to achieve longevity by leaving storylines open ended. For some odd reason, producers think cliffhangers will make sponsors want to renew a show to see what happens.

This is due chiefly to the fact BBC 1 is funded by license fees for T.V. access rather than advertising sponsorship, so creators are definitely more in control in terms of content and where it will go. By contrast, if one watches the first season of "Heroes" as heavily funded by Nissan, Hiro Nakamura is constantly calling his car "the Nissan Versa" instead of "car" like normal people. If you're like me, you

never love your car enough to call it anything. Hell, I leave my car unlocked in the hopes it'll be stolen and I can get the insurance money for it. I guess I would call it "orphan".

All this is background for what makes *Life on Mars* as good as it was. It's premise is very simple, the situations that arise therein quite complex. It weaves together a few different genres in what seems like a police procedural as interpreted through literary magical realism. Sam Tyler (John Simm) is a Detective Chief Inspector at the Hyde precinct of Manchester in 2006. The show opens with him and his team tracking down a serial killer and narrowly missing him. During the course of this short exposition, one finds Tyler is romantically involved with a Detective Inspector under his supervision, Maya.

Maya independently follows another lead to the serial killer, resulting in her kidnapping and leaving Tyler despondent. Struggling to collect himself after hearing of Maya's kidnapping, Tyler stops his car to step outside and is promptly run over by a passing motorist. Lying on the street and in shock, Sam loses consciousness and opens his eyes. In 1973.

What happens after that is culture shock on the level of a sheltered Westerner's first time in India.

Sam, in the 1973 world, finds his way to Manchester and Salford Police CID where he's been documented to have transferred over from Hyde. He's also a Detective Inspector serving under DCI Gene Hunt. The meat of this show revolves around the constant clashes between Sam's 2006 procedure and ethics and Gene's alcohol and rage infused way of things. While on the surface you think you want to root for Sam, one finds Sam a bit more conniving at times in light of Gene's much more honest approach.

Other tangential but weighty issues include Sam's acceptance of being in 1973 and constant questioning of the reality of his here and now, as well as how a more enlightened man of 2006 deals with sexism, racism, corruption and collateral damage caused to innocents during Gene's investigations.

Sam's time in 1973 is also peppered with teases of his 2006 life through nightmares and voices on the radio. Just enough to get him through his 1973 life, but occasionally working at cross purposes with his colleagues in his single minded pursuit to get back home. What happens when he does get home is the best ending of any T.V. series I've seen. - nate

house m.d. - season 5

★★★★☆

The final episode of the season gave an expected unexpected turn when what happened... well, didn't really happened. And even if it wasn't as good as the season 4 finale, House M.D. made for pretty good popular television – after all, Olivia Wilde got the first place on Maxim's Hot List. That means she's popular, right? Oh, no... that's only because she made out with different women on the show.

However, I think we've gotten a lot of character development this season – when is the not-so-new team going to be added to the credits? - I also felt a few things weren't right. First of all, I've never taken an interest in Foreman, so I don't appreciate the writers trying to make him more of a person by shoving him with Thirteen... at this point of his on-screen-life. Also... P.I., whatever happened to that?

Best of the season? House with Wilson making up on Birthmarks, Cameron taking Cuddy's job on Big Baby, House being 'happy' on The Softer Side, the Le Scaphandre et le Papillon-esque Locked In episode, House losing his mojo and getting Amber back.

A special mention of that which happened, but did not happen, and the bachelor party. - amy



**portugirl**

by Yu Aoi, Photographs by Yoko Takahashi
Photography/Travel
★★★¼☆

Portugirl [ポルトガール] is Japanese actress Yu Aoi's third (if not mistaken) photobook collaboration with Yoko Takahashi, who previously took photos on Travel Sand [トラベル・サンド] and Dandelion [タンデライオン]. This time they head over to Europe's Portugal to visit the island of Madeira.

The book is presented in the form of 66 postcards and an almost-giant map with doodles and annotations of the trip, very little writing – only two postcards come with written information – all on a DVD-case-sized carton box.

I particularly love the way Yoko Takahashi uses natural light in her photographs to make the most simple half-eaten dish look good. There's also Yu Aoi's natural photogenic gene that makes her standing making a face look interestingly good. She even looks great with black-rimmed glasses and showing of her braces.

The colors and textures in the photos remind me of old photographs on my father's albums with pictures he used to take during his travels in Venezuela in the 70s, and

many of the shots in this collection could even be sold as souvenir postcards in Madeira. So it's not the quality of the photographer that takes from this, and it's definitely not the subject matter – though, there are some who hate that there's not enough close-ups of Yu. What bothers me about it is the format.

The box that contains all is pretty much white, so easy to stain with dusty surfaces, or careless hands. The postcards come in sets of 12 (or 6) photos that you can tear apart, which I don't know if I want to do as it's so easy to bend the corners of the photos. Everything is in danger of being messed up, so it's hard to keep this a collector's item.

amy wong//nate wong.notrelated//jumi//olga rojo c.//maca//sue//

contributors//