

## Top 5 Films You Might Have Missed

Time to eviscerate the dust from your DVD shelf

By [Chloe Kent](#), Film and TV Editor (2016/17)  
Thursday 9 March 2017

Let's be real - we all miss a lot of films. Either you've straight up not heard of the pictures in question, or else they've been on your 'to watch' list for so long that, much like cleaning your teeth and taking your makeup off at 4am after a heavy night in Revs, you know it's worth doing and you'll feel better for it but you simply cannot be bothered. So here are five pictures which are either desperately yearning to hop onto your watchlist, or which you should maybe think of ticking off.

### **Hanna -**



Image: Focus Features

Featuring Saoirse Ronan at the dawn of her career, *Hanna* tells the story of a young girl raised in the wilderness of northern Finland by her father in total isolation. An ex-CIA operative, he's trained her as an assassin, due to the minor inconvenience of Cate Blanchett wanting to kill her. With a soundtrack composed by The Chemical Brothers, both the narrative and cinematography pervaded by strong fairytale elements, this may well be director Joe Wright's masterpiece. *Hanna* features one of the most artful fight scenes in recent memory, the camera spinning round in one unbroken tracking shot as punches are thrown and fists fly. A TV remake is reportedly in the works - with a story that'd lend itself beautifully to the more developed, nuanced backstories television inevitably lends itself to with its longer runtime, this feels like a recipe for success. Get the most underrated action film of the last decade off your "To-do" list.

### **Bronson -**



Image: Vertigo Films

A fictionalised biopic of one of Britain's most notorious criminals, *Bronson* features perhaps the strongest performance of Tom Hardy's career. He's man at war with everyone and everything around him, but even more so with himself. Bronson delivers the story of his life to a motionless theatre audience, interspersed with mockumentary footage of prison riots and life behind bars. Bold, provocative, and immensely entertaining. It's a cocktail of brutal violence, toxic masculinity, with some classic Refn camerawork. The film is interspersed with long, haunting shots of Hardy staring directly into the camera, his expression blank but his eyes filled with a haunting, empty rage. Eccentric and darkly humorous, it's the ultimate in ultraviolence. As Bronson says of life inside, it's "madness at it's very best."

#### **Attack the Block -**



Image: Screen Gems

*Attack the Block* is the first of two comedies on this list with a sociopolitical commentary. Directorial debut of Joe Cornish, the film is regarded by many as a cult classic in the making. Fairly successful in the UK, the film flopped in the US, perhaps because it's so unflinchingly British that it manages to slip over the head of a viewer with a less nuanced understanding of racial and class relations in the UK. It details the alien invasion of a South London housing estate, by monsters which are literally just the colour black, a shade so dark it reflects no light at all, armed with teeth and claws. Perhaps a slightly on the nose metaphor, granted, but it poses the tongue in cheek question of which is scarier - which is scarier, monstrous entities from outer space or young black men - and then, as is dishearteningly reflected in a number of reviews, highlights the fact many would pick the latter. It's extremely funny, and despite being primarily

tongue in cheek, has believable, human characters. They embody the stereotypes of the area they're from, without seeming parodic or patronising.

### **Four Lions -**



Image: Optimum Releasing

Okay, you've probably seen this, but tell me you don't have at minimum three friends who bought the DVD in an HMV closing-down sale two years ago, and have yet to peel the plastic wrap off the box. Taking an extremely serious topic – radical Islamic terrorism – and using it for a comedy film is, on the surface, a hard sell. It all just sounds a bit *South Park*, something your thirteen year old brother probably thinks is extremely hard hitting and edgy, but from anyone else prompts little more than an eye roll and maybe a half-hearted chuckle. But it manages to avoid falling into such a trap. Injecting humour into one of the darkest realities of 21st century life, the gags are absurd, the punchlines even more so. One of the film's iconic scenes involves a man being killed by tripping up over a sheep while carrying a bag of explosives. Chaos ensues. The comedy stems from the fact that this quartet of terrorists are, quite frankly, useless. All this is done without the film managing to come across as racist – something which could have been all too easy to slip into, and which I had serious suspicions about on my first viewing – or trivialising of something so serious. It's a laugh out loud, classically British comedy, which directs a beam of torchlight into the darkness, points, and laughs.

### **Hard Candy -**



Image: Lionsgate

The darkest edition to this list, leave at the door the impression you may have garnered that independent

cinema was a barrel of laughs . *Hard Candy* features Ellen Page as a young girl who appears to be being groomed by a peadophile online. The opening of the film features their first meeting, and eventually the pair head back to his home. Chilling stuff. But the tables quickly turn, and Hayley (that's Page) turns out to be far less naive than she's been letting on. Their sinister rendezvous spirals into a stomach churning game of cat and mouse, where at times you wonder quite who you ought to be rooting for. It's not a perfect movie – some fairly significant plotholes stick out like a cluster of sore thumbs as the credits roll – but considering it was David Slade's first directorial effort it's pretty impressive (although, the man went on to direct 2007's *30 Days of Night* and the third instalment to the infamous *Twilight* saga, so maybe this was a one-hit wonder). One of the only films I've seen which names the colourist in the opening credits, it's a stunning visual spectacle, claustrophobically cartwheeling between cherry-red and cyan. According to the DVD extras, the colouring process of the film was premeditated and not simply thrown in post-production, requiring a custom-built digital intermediate. If, like me, you're a massive nerd about the filmmaking process, it's worth seeing for that alone. If you can stomach it.



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