

## CLASSIC REVIEW

## BLOW-UP (1966)

**Director:** Michelangelo Antonioni**Writers:** Michelangelo Antonioni, Julio Cortázar**Stars:** David Hemmings, Vanessa Redgrave, Sarah Miles**Runtime:** 111 minutes

**PLOT:** A mod London photographer seems to find something very suspicious in the shots he has taken of a mysterious beauty in a desolate park.

**REVIEW:** Most "swinging London" films are characterised by hand-held wild parties filmed from an open-top bus in Piccadilly or Chelsea, but *Blow-Up* wanders out to SE7 and finds quiet, almost unpopulated spaces, indefinitely haunted yet eerily attractive.

The central character is a photographer played by David Hemmings. Snapping away in an eerily unpopulated park, the photographer catches some shots that seem to show an older man and a younger woman having an innocent, quiet moment.

However, the woman (Vanessa Redgrave) pursues him and demands he turn over the film, then arrives at his studio to press her case with a jittery,



neurotic flirtatiousness that further piques Thomas' terminally cool interest. He palms her off with the wrong roll and develops his photographs: under extreme analysis, he seems to find a man with a gun lurking in the undergrowth, catching the woman's panicky or complicit eye. Another photograph shows a vague form that might be a body, and a return to the park turns up an actual corpse - but then all the evidence is taken away and the photographer loses his conviction. He has latched onto a murder and surrenders to the distractions that clutter his life.

Despite its thriller hook, *Blow-Up* is less a mystery than a portrait of swinging alienation. Antonioni has described the disappearance of his hero as his "signature." It reminds us too of Shakespeare's Prospero, whose actors "were all spirits, and are melted into air." "*Blow-Up*" audaciously involves us in a plot that promises the solution to a mystery, and leaves us lacking even its players.

Reviewed by S.M. Intisab Shahriyar

## MOVIE REVIEW

## MARK WAHLBERG THE GAMBLER

**Directors:** Rupert Wyatt**Writers:** William Monahan, James Toback**Stars:** Mark Wahlberg, Jessica Lange, Brie Larson, John Goodman**Strength:** Acting, story, character development**Weakness:** Forced conclusion**Runtime:** 111 minutes**Rating:** 3/5

**PLOT:** Professor and gambler Jim Bennett's debt causes him to borrow money from his mother and a loan shark. The more he plays to pay his debts, the deeper he drowns. Further complicating his situation is his relationship with one of his students. Will Bennett risk his life for a second chance?

**REVIEW:** The Gambler tells the story

of Jim Bennett, a college professor with a dangerous and self-destructive addiction to gambling at underground casinos in the underbelly of Los Angeles. His addiction soon begins to effect his professional and personal life to severe and deadly consequences. The Gambler features great performances from Mark Wahlberg and Jessica Lange along with stylish direction from Rupert Wyatt. Much like the 1974 original, *The Gambler* is very much so movie about a singular character. We see Wahlberg's Jim Bennett in every scene, and see him make every bet, lose every hand and blow every dollar. This is a new, transformed and extremely mature performance from Mark Wahlberg. The supporting cast

gives amazing performances, especially Goodman. Rupert Wyatt proves that not only can he direct a big budget action spectacle as *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* but he can also deliver hard hitting drama. For a film as dark as *The Gambler*, some viewers may feel that the ending doesn't fit and feels more like a studio ending rather than something that would be true to the original vibe of it all. But that doesn't take away from the overall enjoyment of it. It is suitable for people of all ages and is a must watch this season, especially those that have been waiting for Mark Wahlberg to deliver a career changing performance.

Reviewed by Mohammad Haque

## TEVAR (2015)

**Director:** Amit Sharma**Writer:** Gunasekhar, Shantanu Srivastava**Casts:** Sonakshi Sinha, Shruti K. Haasan, Arjun Kapoor**Strength:** Excellent action scenes**Weakness:** Overstretched climax sequence, slow second half**Runtime:** 157 minutes**Rating:** 2.5/5

**PLOT:** A Kabaddi player rescues a young woman from an unwanted marriage and hides her in his home.

**REVIEW:** With the start of the New Year, director Amit Sharma gives us something that is quintessentially Bollywood. It's for those who love Bollywood and it's over the top romantic-action drama. *Tevar* is exactly one of them. It's a clichéd and quite predictable story of a multi-talented, good hearted hero and an extremely notorious and slimy git as the villain. The formula is typical masala films, in that the hero rescuing the damsel in distress, striking a friendship which later turns to love. This marks Amit Sharma's directorial debut, who

does a fine job with his first film and could be a director to watch out for.

As far as performances are concerned, Arjun Kapoor manages to live up to the expectations audiences expect from him. It's great to see him pull off such high octane action sequences. There is, however, a whiff of similarity between his character and that of Ishaqzaade's Parma. A similarly wonderful performance was put forth by Sonakshi Sinha. She gets into the character of Radhika with such an ease, as if she is portraying herself. Watching her dancing was a delight, as she was graceful. The true show stealer was Manoj Bajpai. Right from his first scene where he sits on a chair in the middle of the highway, wearing coloured aviators and some truly funky clothes, the actor packs a punch. He makes for a fantastic villain and you will truly hate him all through the film.

The movie is mostly decently presented with its quirky punch lines and enjoyable action scenes. The film is enjoyable in parts but

the rest of it isn't enough to keep you hooked on. Also, tighter editing would have kept the film shorter, since the storyline isn't good enough to justify a 157min runtime. In short, the movie is watchable as long as you set your expectations nice and low.

Reviewed By Mehnaj Kabir

