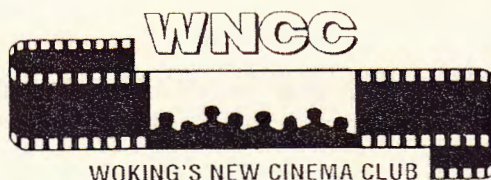


# The Main Feature



Issue Number 1 – 13<sup>th</sup> September 2007

## Notes on a Scandal

UK/2007/92 mins

### Cast

Judi Dench	Barbara Covett
Cate Blanchett	Sheba Hart
Bill Nighy	Richard Hart
Tom Georgeson	Ted Mawson
Michael Maloney	Sandy Pabblem
Joanna Scanlan	Sue Hodge
Shaun Parkes	Bill Rumer
Emma Kennedy	Linda
Syreeta Kumar	Gita
Andrew Simpson	Steven Connolly
Philip Davis	Brian Bangs
Wendy Nottingham	Elaine Clifford
Tameka Empson	Antonia Robinson
Leon Skinner	Davis

**Directed by Richard Eyre**

**Screenplay by Patrick Marber**

**Based on Zoe Hellers novel "What Was She Thinking: Notes on a Scandal"**



This multi award winning film certainly has some heavy weight talent. To bring together such a stellar cast is certainly an impressive achievement yet it doesn't result in one star trying to out act another.

In this psychological thriller of great skill, Judi Dench plays the role of Barbara, a dumpy near retirement age teacher of superior intellect who is desperately lonely. The centre of her world is her aging cat that she dotes on. To vent her frustrations and give her some form of company she writes a daily journal in which she pours scorn on the inferior people surrounding her.

Her life is improved greatly when she finds a new "victim" to lavish her caustic attention on. Young, beautiful, gifted art teacher Sheba joins the faculty and immediately attracts her attention. She observes from afar to begin with, recording her observations in her trusty journal. Slowly though she wheedles her way into the affections of Sheba until she lands an invite to the family home for a meal. There she meets Sheba's Husband Richard (Bill Nighy) who is 20 years her senior, and her two children, a feisty 16 year old daughter and a younger son with Downs Syndrome. Instead of embracing this potential new group of friends, she views them as competition for Sheba's affection.

Barbara's slow and stealthy move to control Sheba is given a great boost when she discovered Sheba having sex with a 15 year old student. Whilst she promises to sever all ties she keeps going back to him and this aids Barbara in her manipulation. Sheba is uncomfortable with Barbara's attention especially when she fears there may be a sexual interest.

Their dark relationship comes to a head when a hugely distressed Barbara arrives on Sheba's doorstep begging for help in taking her beloved dying cat to the vets. Instead Sheba finds the strength to instead go to her sons school play which is a blow too great for Barbara to deal with. She sets in motion a scandal which will rock the foundations of both their worlds in ways she cannot have imagined.

Patrick Marber (Closer) succeeds in creating a deliciously wicked, witty and crisply written script in NOTES, and it only enhances his reputation for giving an audience a story well developed and with characters that you can't take your eyes off on the screen. Added to this there is a fantastically evocative musical score which helps greatly to increase the tension.

Had the film not been up against "The Queen" at so many awards ceremonies it would certainly and deservedly have received a greater number of statues for the mantelpiece.

Enjoy



## **BBC** NEWS

### **Oscar-winning actress Wyman dies**

**Jane Wyman, one of Hollywood's biggest stars of the 1940s and '50s and the first wife of former US President Ronald Reagan, has died aged 90.**

She was nominated for four Oscars, winning once for her role as the deaf rape victim in 1948's Johnny Belinda. Wyman, who also appeared in TV soap opera Falcon Crest, died on Monday at her home in Palm Springs in California. She married Reagan, then a fellow actor, in 1940. They had two children and divorced eight years later.

Wyman had appeared alongside Reagan in two of her early hits - the 1938 comedy Brother Rat and its sequel Brother Rat and a Baby. Her popularity rose after the war, and her first Oscar nomination came in 1947 for her role opposite Gregory Peck in The Yearling.

She won two years later for her moving performance as a woman who could not speak or hear in Johnny Belinda. Her success continued in the 1950s, and she established herself as one of the finest dramatic actresses of her time with The Glass Menagerie, Alfred Hitchcock's Stage Fright and Here Comes the Groom with Bing Crosby.

Further Oscar nominations came her way for The Blue Veil and Magnificent Obsession.

Her film career ended in 1969 when she co-starred with Bob Hope and Jackie Gleason in *How to Commit Marriage*. From 1981 to 1990, she was best known as Angela Channing, the Napa Valley winery owner who ruled the roost on *Falcon Crest*.

Married five times in all, Wyman rarely discussed her split from Reagan, but did say they split because "politics built a barrier between us". "I tried to make his interests mine, but finally there was nothing to sustain our marriage," she said. The couple had a daughter, Maureen, who died in 2001, and adopted a son, Michael, now a talk show host.

When Regan died in 2004, Wyman said that "America has lost a great president and a great, kind and gentle man". Wyman's age was officially listed as 93, but according to several sources including her family's website, she was 90. It stated that she initially wanted to be seen as older to help her film career at an early stage.

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The Venezia 64 Jury at the 64th Venice Film Festival, chaired by **Zhang Yimou** and comprised of **Catherine Breillat, Jane Campion, Emanuele Crialese, Alejandro González Iñárritu, Ferzan Ozpetek** and **Paul Verhoeven**, having viewed all twenty-three films in competition, has decided as follows:

**GOLDEN LION for Best Film:**  
**SE, JIE (LUST, CAUTION)** by Ang LEE (USA/China/China, Taiwan)

**SILVER LION for Best Director to:**  
**Brian DE PALMA** for the film: REDACTED (USA)

**SPECIAL JURY PRIZE to (ex aequo):**  
**LA GRAINE ET LE MULET** by Abdellatif KECHICHE (France)  
**I'M NOT THERE** by Todd HAYNES (USA)

**COPPA VOLPI**  
**for Best Actor:**  
**Brad PITT** in the film **THE ASSASSINATION OF JESSE JAMES BY THE COWARD ROBERT FORD** by Andrew DOMINIK (USA)

**COPPA VOLPI**  
**for Best Actress:**  
**Cate BLANCHETT** in the film: **I'M NOT THERE** by Todd HAYNES (USA)

**MARCELLO MASTROIANNI AWARD**  
**for Best Young Actor or Actress:**  
**Hafsia HERZI** in the film **LA GRAINE ET LE MULET** by Abdellatif KECHICHE (France)

**OSELLA**  
**for Best Cinematography to:**  
**Rodrigo PRIETO** director of photography for the **SE, JIE (LUST, CAUTION)** di Ang LEE (USA/China/China, Taiwan)

**OSELLA**  
**for Best Screenplay to:**  
**Paul LAVERTY** for the film **IT'S A FREE WORLD...** by Ken LOACH (UK/Italy/Germany/Spain)

**SPECIAL LION for Overall Work to:**  
**NIKITA MIKHALKOV**

The Jury is delighted to acknowledge the consistent brilliance of Nikita Mikhalkov's body of work. His new film is once again a confirmation of his mastery in exploring and revealing to us, with great humanity and emotion, the complexity of existence.

**SILVER LION FOR BEST SHORT FILM for Best Short Film to:**  
**DOG ALTOGETHER** by Paddy CONSIDINE (UK)

## Reactions to ....

### The Squid & The Whale – 17<sup>th</sup> May 2007

Score 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
 Votes ~ ~ ~ 2 2 3 7 9 7 3 ~

Total Votes - 33 Average Score – 6.575 Position in Season – 13<sup>th</sup>

Season Average – 6.915

Last Season Average – 6.714

Film	Score	Position
Joyeux Noel	8.03	1 <sup>st</sup>
Only Human	7.59	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Machuca	7.57	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Paradise Now	7.39	4 <sup>th</sup>
The Constant Gardener	7.38	5 <sup>th</sup>
Pierpoint	7.295	6 <sup>th</sup>
Intimate Relations	7.25	7 <sup>th</sup>
Cache	7.05	8 <sup>th</sup>
House of Flying Daggers	7	9 <sup>th</sup>
De – Lovely	6.65	10 <sup>th</sup>
Good Night & Good Luck	6.63	11 <sup>th</sup>
The Return	6.61	12 <sup>th</sup>
The Squid & The Whale	6.575	13 <sup>th</sup>
3 Burial of Melquiades Estrada	6.59	14 <sup>th</sup>
In the Mood for Love	6.27	15 <sup>th</sup>
De Battre Mon Coeur s'est arête	6.09	16 <sup>th</sup>
The Proposition	5.6	17 <sup>th</sup>

An excellent cast

A nice film to round off the season


A difficult subject with a very personal perspective

Hard to feel any sympathy for such an intolerant person

## Next Time

27<sup>th</sup> September 2007 – Pan's Labyrinth

In post civil war Spain a young girl in a dark, harsh and violent world, escapes to a magical labyrinth where she must survive three tasks to see her father and king again. A beautiful, charming and graphic tale of the amazing resourcefulness of a child to cope in spite of circumstances.

 SPAIN/2006/119 mins



**Repropoint**

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