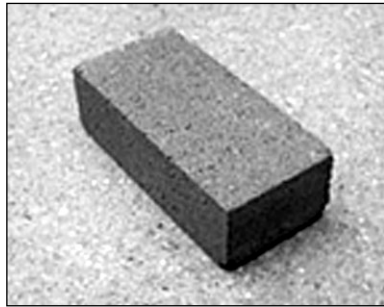


Genre mix gives birth to a Brick



Sometimes, just sometimes, when a fresh mind is brought to an old game in the world of film, the resulting mutation is inspired. And what you end up with is a film like *Brick*.

A hybrid of the hard-boiled detective genre and the American high school movie, *Brick* is Californian writer/director Rian Johnson's first feature. Don't get me wrong – this movie may not be for everyone, and some will think it's trying too hard. But there's not another movie out there quite like it.

The dark alleyways of classic detective film noir have been transformed into the urban wasteland of California, where the moody Brendan Frye (played with understated intensity by Joseph Gordon-Lewitt) pursues

Film
Brick
Showing at Rialto
Starts October 5
Directed by Rian Johnson
Review by Cameron Broadhurst

the mysterious disappearance of old girlfriend Emily among the high school criminal underworld.

Watching the reinvention of the genre through a cast of dodgy and self-serving teenagers is a pleasure. To top it off Johnson, who claims inspiration from the novels of Dashiell Hammett rather than detective films, has created a whole lingo of his own, as fast and furious as the plot itself. There are lines like "He's a pot-skulled reef worm with more hop in his head than blood"

(translation: he's a hopeless stoner).

While the femme fatale Laura (Nora Zehetner) lacks bite, more fiery performances by many of the other characters are a treat: Matt O'Leary as Brendan's sidekick the Brain, Lukas Haas as criminal mastermind the Pin, and Megan Good as the manipulative sex goddess Kara. But it has to be said that Gordon-Lewitt's Bogart-like turn as the charismatic Brendan is the thread that holds the tapestry together.

Johnson ran round with *Brick* in his head for six years, and the tightness of the cinematography, dialogue and story show it – all achieved on a family-funded shoestring budget. Although a very different film, in many ways

it's reminiscent of that other auteur masterpiece, Richard Kelly's *Donnie Darko*. Both films show rare flair in mixing weighty drama with humour in a novel way.

Brick's failings depend on your perspective – some may find the marriage of high school and noir unconvincing, but if you like detective flicks and aren't put off by young actors, you're likely to love it.

The heady plot and bizarre characterisation are far more intriguing than the usual crime/detective flick, and the whole thing feels entirely fresh – like something that's never been done before.

So, what the hell does "*Brick*" mean? Well, you'll just have to investigate the matter yourself.

Inconvenient, but it's the truth



Al Gore was wooden and unconvincing in his battle for the 2000 American presidency. His performance in *An Inconvenient Truth* is anything but.

Screening at Auckland's International Film Festival, *An Inconvenient Truth* tackles an issue close to Gore's heart – global warming. It's America's highest grossing documentary this year.

A sensitive Al Gore emerges as he reveals the hurt he felt in losing the election in 2000. After the defeat he needed something to focus on, so he decided to travel the world raising awareness of global warming. This film follows

Film
An Inconvenient Truth
Cinemas nationwide
Showing now
Directed by Davis Guggenheim
Review by Scott Winton

him on that journey.

The majority of the film is Al Gore presenting to an audience in a slide-show fashion, and at times it felt like sitting in on an extended PowerPoint presentation.

The graphs and data are used to good effect to illustrate his points. But don't be afraid, it's not all numbers and pie charts.

With vivid imagery from

places like Tanzania, Antarctica, Bangladesh and New York, we see the devastating effect global warming is having, and will have on the planet. This is where *An Inconvenient Truth* is at its best.

We all know the world's heating up, but who cares? What this film does very well is explain why we should care, and what the humble citizen can do about it.

It is a serious movie about a serious issue and don't expect to be rolling in the aisles with laughter, but there are a few lighter moments. You may wonder how a frog boiling in water can get a giggle, but Gore manages to do just that.

In fact, Gore's personality shines through as he punctuates the presentation with his own life experiences.

We see him as a boy on a farm in Montana, to his days at university where he discovered his passion for the environment. Finally we see him as vice-president and international statesmen pushing his environmental message around the world.

This has led some cynics to say the film is the launch of Al Gore's bid for the 2008 presidency. That might be true, but if he helps save the planet along the way, I think we can forgive him.

What's on

cinema

World Trade Centre
Cinemas nationwide
Opens October 5

Director Oliver Stone takes on the events of September 11, 2001. Starring Nicolas Cage, Maria Bello, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Michael Peña.



Tristram Shandy: A Cock & Bull Story
Rialto
Opens October 1

Re-teaming with his '24 Hour Party People' director Michael Winterbottom, comic genius Steve Coogan has adapted Laurence Sterne's classic, "unfilmable" novel about procrastination.



Step Up
Cinemas nationwide
Opens September 28

Dancing movies are back in force and this one brings together romance, R&B and a confluence of classic ballet with street dance.

events

Auckland Seafood Festival
Auckland Fish Market, off Daldy St

September 30 – October 1. Come along and join in the fun at Auckland's first ever Seafood Festival, at the Auckland Fish Market.

The event will showcase the huge array of seafood available in the Hauraki Gulf and surrounding New Zealand waters.

Diwali Festival of Lights
Britomart Transport Centre
October 12-15

Diwali, also known as Deepavali (literally a "row of lamps"), is perhaps the most important and ancient of the Indian festivals. The Diwali Festival of Lights gives the Auckland Indian communities the opportunity to share this much-loved cultural tradition with other New Zealanders and their families.

Westfield Style Pasifika 2006 Fashion Awards

Auckland Town Hall
October 5 – 6
Westfield Style Pasifika Fashion Awards is a potent mix of traditional contemporary fashion, music and dance. Showcasing the vibrant and the innovative from New Zealand and the Pacific, the show is responsible for launching some of this country's finest emerging design and performance talent.

theatre

Bad Jelly the Witch
The Winter Garden, The Civic, the Edge
Until October 8

Enter a world where witches can turn children into sausages or chop them up to make boy-girl soup. Where they can turn policemen into apple trees or bananas into mice.

Spike Milligan's fairy-tale of good triumphing over evil and defeating the most horridable witch in the world gives us family entertainment that will appeal to all children of all ages for all time.

Cymbeline
Silo Theatre
October 5-21

After their acclaimed debut *The Dog's Bollix*, The Peripeteia Players offer this return season of Shakespeare's epic thriller. Arrive early to flip a fateful coin that will decide the cast line-up every night.

Directed by Stuart Devenie.

