

FALL ENTERTAINMENT PREVIEWS



The boys of *The Covenant*

We interrupt our usual Reviews section to bring you a roundup of this fall's arts menu

FILM

September

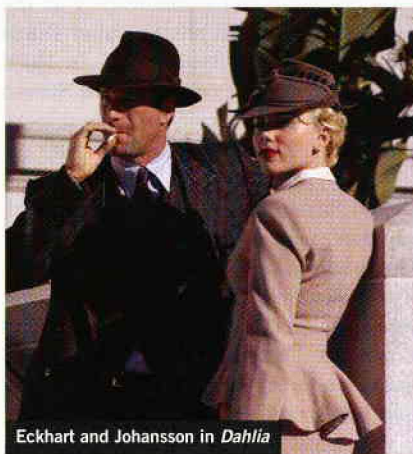
Hollywoodland (Focus Features) If Brandon Routh left you cold as Superman, how about Ben Affleck? He plays actor George Reeves (TV's Superman) in this look at the star's mysterious death. Adrien Brody, Diane Lane, and Bob Hoskins costar. (Sept. 8)

The Covenant (Sony) A male *The Craft*? That's our take on this story of four hot guys with a supernatural legacy who must fight evil. The cast looks very WB with names that invite all sorts of jokes: Steven Strait, Toby Hemingway, Sebastian Stan, Chace Crawford, and as if all that weren't enough, Taylor Kitsch. (Sept. 8)

The Black Dahlia (Universal) Scarlett Johansson, Hilary Swank, and Mia Kirshner bring voluptuous oomph to this noirish

tale based on one of Hollywood's legendary murders. Josh Hartnett and Aaron Eckhart are the cops who are probably putty in their hands. (Sept. 15)

The Queen (Miramax) Helen Mirren looks spot-on as Elizabeth II in this intimate drama about her relationship with U.K.



Eckhart and Johansson in *Dahlia*

prime minister Tony Blair. Stephen Frears (*Prick Up Your Ears*, *My Beautiful Laundrette*) directs. (Sept. 30)

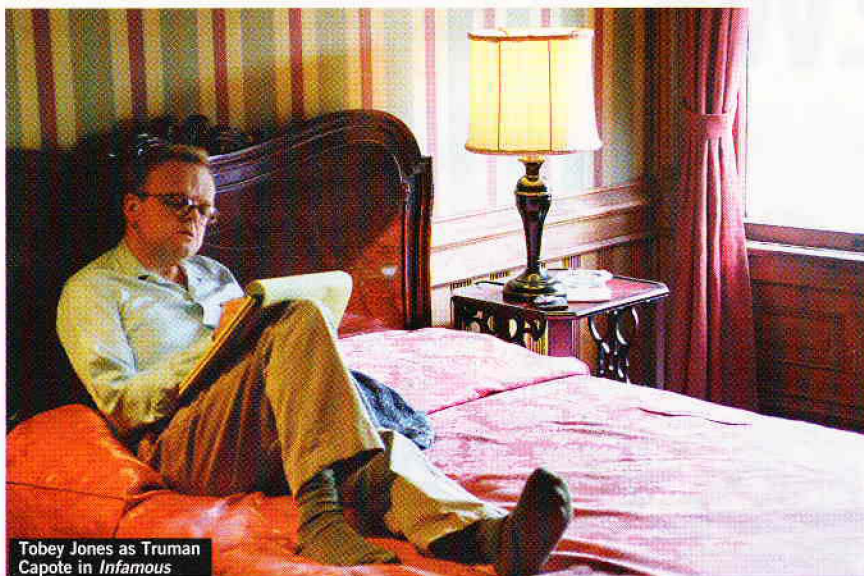
Home of Phobia (a.k.a. Freshman Orientation) (Regent) Sam Huntington (Jimmy Olsen of *Superman Returns*) plays a college freshman who pretends to be gay in a prank to get a hot girl to date him. Out actress Heather Matarazzo and John Goodman costar. (Sept.)

October

Shortbus (ThinkFilm) Writer-director John Cameron Mitchell's heady follow-up to *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* is this all-embracing, envelope-pushing comedy about sex and love (in every possible combination) in the fairy-tale New York City of our dreams. You'll never think of "The Star-spangled Banner" in the same way again. (Oct. 6)

Wrestling With Angels: Playwright Tony Kushner (Ocean Releasing) Filmmaker Freida Lee Mock has a field day with Kushner, the endlessly voluble, fascinating, argumentative, and inspiring Pulitzer Prize-winner for *Angels in* ►

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Tobey Jones as Truman Capote in *Infamous*

America. George C. Wolfe, Meryl Streep, Tonya Pinkins, Maurice Sendak, and many others make an appearance, but Kushner is always the center of attention. (Oct. 9)

Running With Scissors (Sony) Augusten Burroughs's extravagantly comic tale of growing up queer in a very strange household. [See page 50] (Oct. 11)

Infamous (Warner Independent) Talk about a tough act to follow: In the footsteps of Capote, *Infamous* is also the story of the writing of *In Cold Blood*. Toby Jones plays Capote, Sandra Bullock is Harper Lee, and the new Bond (Daniel Craig) is the killer Perry Smith. In this version, Capote is said to clearly fall in love with Perry—and who could blame him? (Oct. 13)

Trade (Lions Gate) German director Marco Kreuzpaintner follows his delightfully fluffy gay romance *Summer Storm* with this harrowing look at sex trafficking. Young Jorge (Cesar Ramos) teams with a Texas cop (Kevin Kline) to rescue his little sister. (Oct. 13)

Marie Antoinette (Sony) Maybe she never said "Let them eat cake," but Kirsten Dunst as the ill-fated royal sure has style. Manolo Blahniks fit for a queen and great pop songs are just the start in this boldly modern, never-dull period piece by director Sofia Coppola. Jason Schwartzman, Judy Davis, Asia Argento, Marianne Faithfull, and Rip Torn have a

blast sparring with each other at Versailles. (Oct. 20).

November

Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan (Fox) Sacha Baron Cohen (the creator of Ali G) takes his clueless reporter Borat on a road trip throughout the United States, never failing to miss an opportunity for laughing at gay panic from his Eastern European hero. Truly silly. (Nov. 3)

Volver (Sony Classics) Pedro Almodóvar is at the top of his game in this wonderfully satisfying story of a mother (the poised, magnificent Penélope Cruz) who covers up the murder of her deadbeat husband by their daughter. Funny, moving, unexpected—it's prime Almodóvar. (Nov. 3)

Fur (Picturehouse) Nicole Kidman is reportedly magnetic and Oscar-worthy as the famed but troubled photographer Diane Arbus, who committed suicide in 1971. Robert Downey Jr. costars, and Steven Shainberg (the kinky *Secretary*) directs, but it's Kidman all the way. (Nov. 10)

Casino Royale (Sony) A newly imagined, tougher, more realistic Bond? Fine, as long as they keep the Bond girls coming (for the ladies who like lipstick lesbians, this time it's the waifish Eva Green) and a new Bond (for the men who don't mind going undercover). Daniel Craig? We'll give him a shot. (Nov. 17)

For Your Consideration (Warner Independent) Another improvised comedy from the brilliant Christopher Guest (*Waiting for Guffman*, *A Mighty Wind*) that's sure to be "best in show" for us, especially with its focus on actors enjoying the Oscar buzz. The cast is bursting with favorites like Ricky Gervais, Parker Posey, Eugene Levy, Jane Lynch, Catherine O'Hara, Harry Shearer, Fred Willard, and many more. (Nov. 17)

Bobby (MGM) Emilio Estevez finally returns to center stage with this Altmanesque drama about the 22 people who were at the Ambassador Hotel the day Bobby Kennedy was assassinated. The stellar cast includes Sharon Stone, Elijah Wood, Demi Moore, Harry Belafonte, Shia LaBeouf, Laurence Fishburne, and many more. This is the tantalizing wild card of the Oscar season. (Nov. 22)

The History Boys (Fox Searchlight) Director Nicholas Hytner and out writer Alan Bennett bring the Tony-winning charmer to the big screen. The winning cast includes Richard Griffiths (of *Harry Potter* and *Withnail & I* fame) in the role of a lifetime, not to mention delightful lads like Dominic Cooper, Stephen Campbell Moore, and the especially delightful Samuel Barnett as Posner. (Nov. 24)

3 Needles (Wolfe) Out filmmaker Thom Fitzgerald directed this movie that connects three different stories—set in rural China, a plantation in Africa, and the Montreal porn industry—to illustrate the face of AIDS today. Made in cooperation with the United Nations, but with Sandra Oh, Chloë Sevigny, and Olympia Dukakis playing nuns, Stockard Channing as the mother of a porn star, and Sook-Yin Lee of *Shortbus*, it's sure to be more than just noble and informative. (Dec. 1)

—Michael Giltz



Almodóvar's *Volver*