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IFC 2010 Holiday Movie Guide WHAT'S SHOWING WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW...

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In theaters the week ending December 4



NATALIE PORTMAN IN "BLACK SWAN," FOX SEARCHLIGHT, 2010

"Black Swan" ([IMDb](#), [trailer](#), [Facebook](#))

The Cast: Natalie Portman, Vincent Cassel, Mila Kunis, Barbara Hershey, Winona Ryder

Director: Darren Aronofsky

Fest Cred: [Venice](#), Telluride, Toronto, AFI

The Gist: If Aronofsky's "The Wrestler" was an uplifting comeback story of a man trying to his best chase away his demons, "Black Swan" is the story of a young woman encouraged to embrace hers in the pursuit of perfection. Yet contrary to early comparisons to his last film, Aronofsky's latest is far more in line with "Requiem for a Dream" by way of Brian De Palma thrillers of the late '70s and early '80s, starring Portman as a strait-laced ballerina who vies for lead in the Lincoln Center's production of "Swan Lake" against a fun-loving newcomer (Kunis), but is suspected by the company's artistic director (Cassel) of not having the inherent danger and daring to play the Black Swan as well as the purer White. (Opens on December 1st.)

"All Good Things" ([IMDb](#))

The Cast: Kirsten Dunst, Ryan Gosling, Kristen Wiig, Frank Langella, Diane Venora, Zoe Lister Jones, Trini Alvarado, Philip Baker Hall

Director: Andrew Jarecki

The Gist: Sometimes being the founder of Moviefone has its advantages as Jarecki was able to [buy back the rights](#) to his much anticipated narrative feature debut from the Weinstein Company over the summer and resettled with Magnolia Pictures after this murder mystery sat in completed form since 2008. Having proven his skills as a storyteller with the doc "Capturing the Friedmans," Jarecki once again dabbles in nonfiction with the true story of New York real estate heir and tabloid staple Robert Durst (Gosling) who was suspected but never charged as part of an investigation into the disappearance of his wife (Dunst) during the early 1980s.

"Bhutto" ([IMDb](#), [trailer](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#))

Directors: Duane Baughman and Johnny O'Hara

Fest Cred: Sundance, Hot Docs, Milwaukee

The Gist: [Bankrolled](#) by San Francisco political consultant Duane Baughman, who was recruited to help Benazir Bhutto reclaim her position as Pakistan's Prime Minister before being assassinated in December 2007, he and O'Hara have collected interviews with Bhutto family members and Condoleezza Rice, among others, for the past two years to create this portrait of embattled political leader and the rich legacy she left behind.

"Come Undone" ([IMDb](#), [trailer](#))

The Cast: Alba Rohrwacher, Pierfrancesco Favino

Director: Silvio Soldini

Fest Cred: Berlinale, Seattle, Locarno

The Gist: Film Movement has continued their commitment to bringing Italian auteur Soldini's work to the States, picking up his follow-up to 2007's melodrama "Days and Clouds." His latest film, originally titled "What More Do I Want," stars "I Am Love"'s Rohrwacher as an office worker stuck in a humdrum marriage who begins a torrid affair with the caterer (Favino) for her workplace, with Soldini detailing the logistical and emotional intricacies of their tryst.

"I Love You Phillip Morris" ([IMDb](#), [trailer](#))

The Cast: Jim Carrey, Ewan McGregor, Leslie Mann, Rodrigo Santoro

Writer/Directors: Glenn Ficarra and John Requa

Fest Cred: [Sundance](#), Cannes, São Paulo

The Gist: As [Jim Carrey told Matt Singer](#) at Sundance '08, the directorial debut of "Bad Santa" scribes Ficarra and Requa is just about "a guy who needs love and goes to any lengths to get it." For a script he rated as high as "The Truman Show" and "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind," Carrey went to great lengths to get the role of Steven Jay Russell, a police officer-turned-con artist who leaves his wife (Mann) in Texas to live an openly gay lifestyle in Miami, only to find his true love (McGregor) in prison when one of his schemes goes awry. Pretty much everything for this dark comedy that [could go wrong, has](#) since it premiered at Sundance nearly three years ago and failed to meet any of its original release dates, but Roadside Attractions came to the rescue, just four months shy of the release date of Ficarra and Requa's next film, "Crazy, Stupid Love."

"Meskada" ([IMDb](#), [trailer](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#))

The Cast: Nick Stahl, Rachel Nichols, Kellan Lutz, Jonathan Tucker, Norman Reedus, Grace Gummer

Director: Josh Sternfeld

Fest Cred: Tribeca

The Gist: When this thriller premiered at Tribeca this past spring, Alison Willmore [wrote](#), "the second film from writer/director Josh Sternfeld ("Winter Solstice") has ambitions reaching beyond being a straightforward police procedural," though critics, including her, were mixed about the end result. Nick Stahl and Rachel Nichols star as small-town sleuths who investigate a botched home invasion case that claims the life of a young child in an affluent community and enflames class divisions when the main suspects are from the poorer community nearby. Grace Gummer, Meryl Streep's second daughter to go into the family profession, makes her film debut.

"Night Catches Us" ([IMDb](#), [trailer](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#))

The Cast: Anthony Mackie, Kerry Washington, Jamie Hector, Wendell Pierce, Jamara Griffin, Amari Cheatom

Writer/Director: Tanya Hamilton

Fest Cred: Sundance, New Directors/New Films, San Francisco, Seattle, Los Angeles

The Gist: Originally titled "Stringbean and Marcus," the film's script earned a Sundance Institute Annenberg grant to allow first-time feature filmmaker Hamilton to make this labor of love about Marcus (Mackie) and Pat (Washington), two ex-Black Panthers whose romantic reunion in Philadelphia after being apart for the better part of a decade is short-lived, thanks to a current Panther ("The Wire"'s Hector) who wants Marcus' head, a detective (Pierce) who wants to blackmail him and an unpredictable client (Cheatom) of Pat's pro bono law practice. Griffin

co-stars as Pat's 10-year-old daughter who forms a reluctant bond with Marcus.

"Rare Exports: A Christmas Tale" ([IMDb](#), [trailer](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#))

The Cast: Onni Tommila, Jorma Tommila, Ilmari Jarvenpaa, Per Christian Ellefsen

Director: Jalmari Helander

Fest Cred: Locarno, Toronto, Fantastic Fest, Sitges

The Gist: Not since "Bad Santa" has a film sullied the good name of Kris Kringle as this Finnish import that exposes the true nature of the bearded fat man who tumbles down your chimney when an archeological dig unearths what a young child believes to be an evil Santa. A murdered herd of nearby reindeer reinforces the boy's beliefs, which he passes along to his father and only escalates the battle between Santa's minions and a group of local hunters in this crazy, crazy film expanded from Helander's earlier [short](#).

"The Warrior's Way" ([IMDb](#), [trailer](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#))

The Cast: Dong-gun Jang, Geoffrey Rush, Kate Bosworth, Danny Huston, Tony Cox

Director: Sngmoo Lee

The Gist: "Matrix" and "Lord of the Rings" producer Barrie Osborne is mixing cultures on an epic scale once again with this \$40 million martial arts flick starring Jang as a fugitive assassin hiding out in the American west, after declining an assignment, where he becomes friendly with a circus knife thrower (Bosworth) and the local barfly (Rush), both of whom have been keeping secrets. Likewise, this film's dirty little secret is that it's been waiting on a release date since being finished in 2008, yet it was clearly because someone underestimated the appeal of ninjas versus cowboys in slo-mo wirefu sequences. Not former NYU film professor Lee, who makes his directorial debut here.

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