



**TIMES SQUARE**  
Crossroads of the world



Advertise  
**HERE**

Click to view  
special offer!

[HOME](#)
[NYC INFO](#)
[MUSIC](#)
[DINING](#)
[FILM](#)
[THEATER](#)
[ART](#)
[SHOPPING](#)
[EVENTS](#)
[MEDIA GALLERY](#)
[BOOK HOTELS](#)
[BUSINESS](#)
[Français](#)

[Theater](#)
[Music](#)
[Dance](#)
[Comedy](#)
[Art](#)
[Food](#)
[Wellness](#)
[International](#)
[Video Events](#)
[Charity Benefits](#)
[Festivals](#)

## FILM

### November '09 New on DVD

Written by Kevin Filipski

**A Christmas Tale (Criterion)**, writer-director Arnaud Desplechin's latest film, lacks his usual rigor. Usually, Desplechin's films are as close to immersion in a great novel as any filmmaker working today: his best, *My Sex Life*, was his longest; *La Sentinelle*, *Esther Kahn* and *Kings and Queen*, though shorter, seem thinner and padded. *A Christmas Tale* is not up to his best, mainly because this melodrama about a dysfunctional French family has so many manipulative but phony climaxes that it seems longer than its 2-1/2 hours. Still, his formidable cast (led by the always remarkable Mathieu Amalric, Catherine Deneuve and Anne Consigny) does wonders throughout, and Desplechin directs with his usual mastery; only the miscalculated script prevents this overstuffed holiday bird from being a truly filling film event. A second disc of extras features Desplechin's involving 2007 documentary about his family's home, *L'aimee*; and *Arnaud's Tale*, a 35-minute featurette that has interviews with the director and his actors.



#### ALSO AVAILABLE...

Poor Uma Thurman can't make the clichéd romantic comedy ***The Accidental Husband (Sony)*** overcome bad jokes and mistimed slapstick (lone extra: making-of featurette); a neat 90-minute primer on Dan Brown's blockbuster book and subsequent movie, ***Angels and Demons Decoded (History Channel)*** crams dozens of outlandish theories into a streamlined, entertaining form, much like Brown's original novel; ***Blood Equity (MVD)***, an eye-opening and sobering glimpse at how the viciousness of the NFL ruins players' lives, shows how uncaring the current union hierarchy is to their plight; the annoying presence of host Al Roker notwithstanding, ***Empire of the Eye: the Magic of Illusion (Microcinema)*** cleverly explores the Renaissance masters' discovery of perspective, with computer-generated imagery helping to make sense of their achievements; a real find, newcomer Addie Land brightens the fitfully observant character study ***Evergreen (Indiepix)*** as a teenager caught between her poor family and her new beau's rich one; Matteo Garrone's expose of the Naples Mafia, ***Gomorra (Criterion)***, is rich in detail and incident but lacking in the human element that would draw us further into these crime stories (best extra: 42-minute interview with author Roberto Saviano); the melodrama ***The Indian (E1)*** finds its heartbeat in the performance of Alison Haislip as a mechanic who helps a young man rebuild both a vintage motorcycle and his own shattered personal life (best extra: interview with director and cast); a daunting three-hour documentary, ***The Ister (Icarus Films)*** is a challenging exploration of the ideas of the 20th century German philosopher Martin Heidegger (lone extra: five additional interview scenes); Fernando Eimbcke's slight but gently perceptive ***Lake Tahoe (Film Movement)*** follows a teenager during a day of meeting even more lonely people than himself (lone extra: French short); the devastating documentary ***The Least of These (Indiepix)*** uncovers a former prison in Texas used as a detention center for foreign families with no legal rights (best extra: festival Q&A); despite the lively presence of Zoe Saldana as a psychic, the haunted-house thriller ***The Skeptic (IFC Films)*** plays like a way overextended "Twilight Zone" episode; Turkish director Nuri Bilge Ceylan won the Best Director award at Cannes for ***Three Monkeys (Zeitgeist)***, a twisty, atmospheric film noir that doubles as an offbeat character study; although obviously released to cash in on delectable star Marion Cotillard's current fame, ***Toi & Moi (Koch Lorber)*** is a winning romantic comedy that rides along on Cotillard's versatility as a movie star and a first-rate comedienne; ***Train (LionsGate)***, another of those Hostel-like gross-outs, finds its unwilling victims aboard a mysterious train taking an American college wrestling team through Eastern Europe to their doom (lone extra: making-of featurette).

[< Prev](#)

[Next >](#)

#### [Film School DC](#)

CDIA at Boston University Washington  
DC Campus  
[www.cdabu.com](http://www.cdabu.com)

#### [Film School](#)

Find Film School. Get Reliable Info In  
Your Area.

[OneClickLocal.com](http://OneClickLocal.com)

#### [Learn to be a Filmmaker](#)

Learn how to shoot and edit film Free  
trial - #1 online film school!

[www.nyvideoschool.com](http://www.nyvideoschool.com)

Ads by Google



