

The Long Firm on BBC Canada

Slightly mad, deliciously bad and shocking dangerous to know — what's not to love about Harry Starks? A charismatic, cruel-but-fair villain with an aversion to pikers who take "liberties" and a penchant for hot pokers, rent boys and Judy Garland, Harry (Mark Strong, right) oozes quiet menace, with just a hint of irresistible vulnerability. The singular embodiment of late '60s London gangster twins Ronnie and Reggie Kray, the scary-loveable Harry is our favourite scoundrel — at least for this month — in four-part miniseries *The Long Firm*, Wednesdays on BBC Canada.



THE SHINOLA

Because better is better

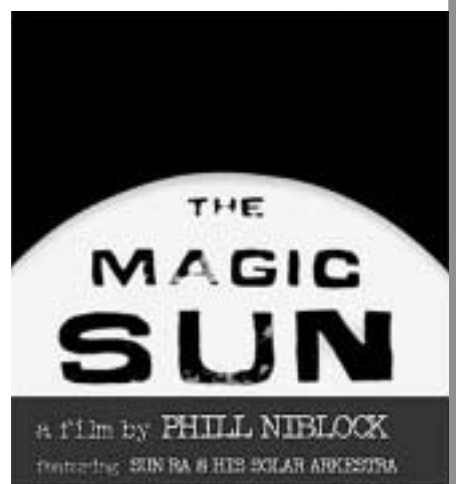
Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro

British-Japanese writer Ishiguro excels at subtlety, sad resignation — think *The Remains of the Day* or *An Artist in the Floating World* — and instantly compelling storytelling. His latest novel promises a present-day sci-fi twist as a 31-year-old woman, Kathy T., begins to recall, in 1990, her sheltered upbringing in a boarding school for children who have a special purpose in life. A long-time "carer" for a series of mystery "donors" whose numbers have included her best childhood friends Ruth and Tommy, Kath gently reveals how the trio slowly came to understand their destinies — a secret that is obvious but nevertheless fascinating. Ishiguro is the original author of the short screenplay that George Toles and Guy Maddin adapted for *The Saddest Music in the World*.



Sun Ra: The Magic Sun

Spaced-out jazz explorer Sun Ra meets his visual match in this short 1966 film by Phil Niblock. Using high-contrast negative film and extreme closeups on the faces and hands of pianist Ra and his Arkestra, the New York director creates a 17-minute work that is every bit as avant-garde and enigmatic as Sun's music. Yep, you read that right — it's only 17 minutes long. But take heart; the DVD also includes a sizable photo gallery and 15 minutes of previously unreleased "philosophical proclamations."



Jann Arden

The affable Arden has always been one of the funniest musicians we've ever met — and her gig hosting the non-televized Juno gala last weekend only confirmed our belief that if this whole singing thing doesn't work out, Jann's got a future in standup. Despite being stuck with the dreary task of helming the four-hour event, Arden never seemed to run out of good one-liners like, "I understand Christina Aguilera just recorded an album under her aboriginal name — Spread Eagle." Next year, how about letting her work the big room?

Queens singer abdicates on eve of local show

On the eve of a local show, the Queens of the Stone Age have lost some of their royalty.

Vocalist Mark Lanegan has left the band's current Canadian tour "due to exhaustion," according to the group's website.

"The band stresses that

all other rumours regarding this subject should be written down, burned and the ashes pushed in to your eyes so that you are unable to find your watercooler / sewing circle. Thank you," the cryptic statement says.

The former Screaming Trees frontman has been

touring with QOTSA in support of their new album, *Lullabies to Paralyze*. No mention was made of how Lanegan's departure affects the band's show.

QOTSA are to play a sold-out show at the Burton Cummings Theatre tonight.

— Staff

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★★★★★

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