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Tekst 11 JUST FOR STARTERS



Hollywood abhors a vacuum. If it can't restrain itself from remaking untouchable classics such as Orson Welles' 1942 film *The Magnificent Ambersons* (redone, badly, for TV recently), why should we expect it to leave alone **Red Dragon**, Thomas Harris's first Hannibal Lecter novel that formed the basis for Michael Mann's faithful and well-regarded 1986 movie *Manhunter*? After all, *Manhunter* didn't have Anthony Hopkins in it as Lecter, and there's a lucrative franchise to milk, post *Silence Of The Lambs* and *Hannibal*.

Despite all that, it's a rather pleasant surprise to find *Red Dragon* isn't anywhere near the cynical exercise in greed one might expect – or at least no more of one than the atrocious book and film of *Hannibal*. *Red Dragon* is arguably the best of the novels, and this movie version deftly and relatively unfussily translates its core assets for the screen: its compelling, forensically-focused detection story, and the clammy relationship between Hannibal and the FBI agent Will Graham (Edward Norton, above) who first captures and then coaxes Lecter into helping him catch another serial killer. This one specialises in slaying families.

Director Brett Ratner (*Rush Hour*) directs with unfussy skill, with less of the ego that Michael Mann brought to

Manhunter. It all evaporates from memory hours after you see it but, at the time, *Red Dragon* is a jaunty little ride.

Apart from the re-releases, I can't say the same about the other films out this week. Neither of them is actually very long, although I feel that, more than smoking, having watched them has shortened my life somewhat. **Club De Monde** is a BritCom obviously made on a tiny budget, bless its heart, set during one night in one club in 1993. I rather liked director Simon Rumley's last film, *The Truth Game*, which confined itself to a dinner party. But by quadrupling, give or take a multiple, the cast, he's vastly diminished the quality of the performances, despite occasional flashes of finery, such as the amusing scenes featuring two coked-up giggling girlfriends who never leave the toilets all night. And when will filmmakers learn that clubbing, like someone else's good or bad trip, is more interesting experienced than recounted and, more often than not, a poor vehicle for drama.

There's much narrative momentum to be had out of hotels, and yet it's also a fertile field for bad movies: see *The Million Dollar Hotel*, Mike Figgis' recent *Hotel*, and now **Villa Des Roses**, a bloated Europudding set before the First World War about a bunch of would-be wacky characters who populate a decrepit Parisian boarding house. Julie Delpy as a chambermaid done wrong by a roguish German artist (Shaun Dingwall) and Shirley Henderson as her salty cook friend just about make the film endurable, but it's so dull that it's like the cinematic equivalent of a tax-exemption form, which one rather suspects was the motivation for making it.

The Big Issue

Lees bij de volgende opgave eerst de vraag voordat je de bijbehorende tekst raadpleegt.

Tekst 11 Just for starters

- 1p **42** Welk van de gerecenseerde films wordt als beste beoordeeld? Noteer de titel van deze film.