

Streaming Feature: Best of New to Netflix December 2013

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on December 2, 2013 - 3:21pm

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We're back! Full of turkey, ready to sit down in front of the TV and zone out with a full Netflix queue. What's the latest and greatest to hit the streaming service du jour? There are some major Hollywood hits like "Skyfall," "Dances with Wolves," and "Apocalypse Now" new to the Netflix universe but we here at HC try to focus on what you might not have seen. Here are ten flicks to add to your queue that could have fallen under your movie radar if we weren't here to pick them up. You're welcome. There's a foreign film, two documentaries, a sci-fi flick, and even a musical. Pick your favorites. Or just watch all ten.



The American

“[The American](#) [17]”

Netflix Description:

On the heels of a rough assignment, assassin Jack declares that his next job will be his last. Dispatched to a small Italian town to await further orders, Jack embarks on a dangerous double life while falling for a lovely villager.

Why:

Because it got screwed by bad marketing. Some numbskull decided to try and turn this introspective, philosophical piece about isolation and age into a "Bourne" sequel, which it most DEFINITELY is not. In fact, even that poster up there is misleading. This is a drama, featuring some

of Clooney's best work against a gorgeous backdrop. People went to see it in theaters and rented it expecting a very different movie and so hated the one they got. Check it out again without the false expectations and you may be surprised by the one you get.



Bronson

[“Bronson \[18\]”](#)

Netflix Description:

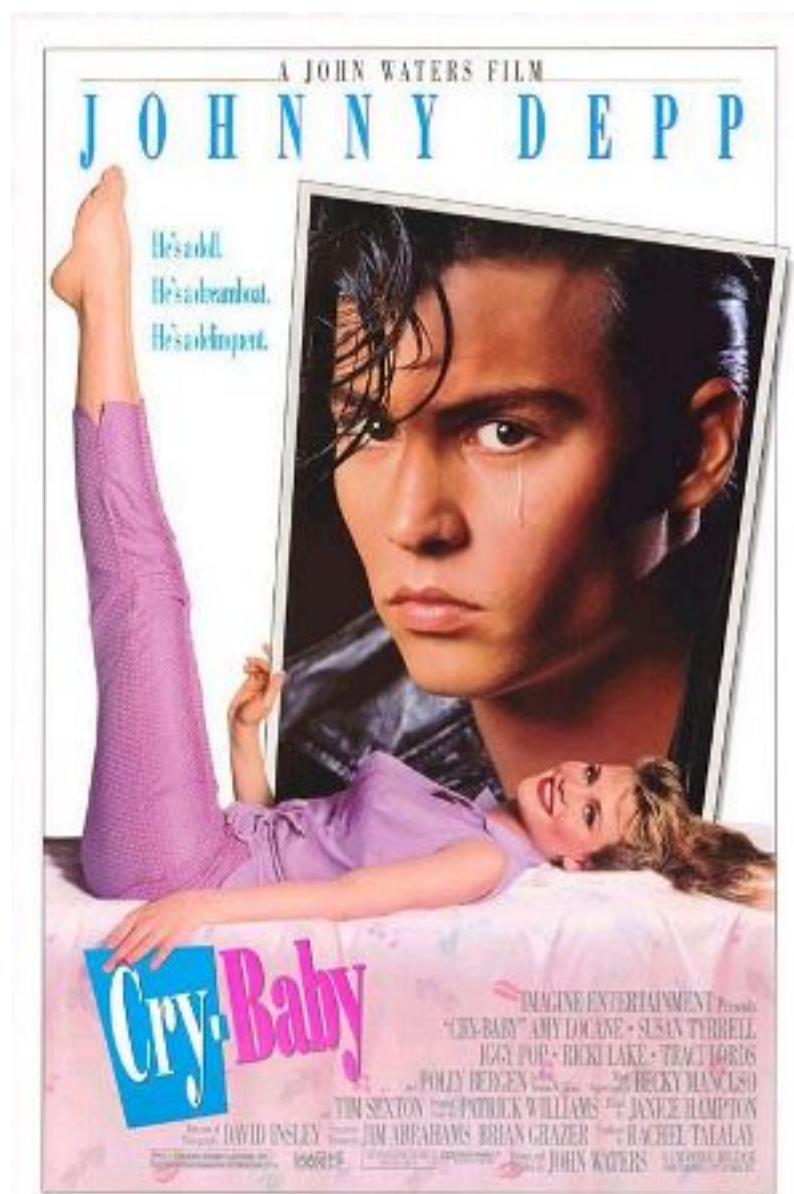
Nicolas Winding Refn's vivid and unflinching biopic delves into the life of Britain's most notorious prisoner, Charlie Bronson — who's been jailed for nearly 35 years — and attempts to dissect the real man behind the deranged persona.

Why:

Because Tom f**king Hardy. The star of “Warrior” and “Inception” broke through in this intense work from the man who would go on to direct “Drive.” It's an amazing piece of acting by Hardy. He's a force of nature and one sensed immediately upon seeing “Bronson” that one was watching the emergence of a future household name. See where it began.



Burn



Cry-Baby

[“Cry-Baby \[21\]”](#)

Netflix Description:

Helmed by director John Waters, this kitschy comedy set in 1950s Baltimore stars Johnny Depp as Wade “Cry-Baby” Walker, a street hood who falls for a goody-two-shoes girl. The unlikely romance sparks a battle between rival factions.

Why:

Because Johnny Depp used to be interesting. Before he gave up acting in favor of silly costumes, Johnny Depp was one of the most engaging actors of his generation and this early oddity is a film that many derided at the time but has grown a cult following over the years. It’s a wacky musical comedy that makes it clear that Depp was fated to become a household name and has that unique John Waters tone that so many have tried to copy but few have succeeded in doing so.

Five more on the next page...



Europa Report

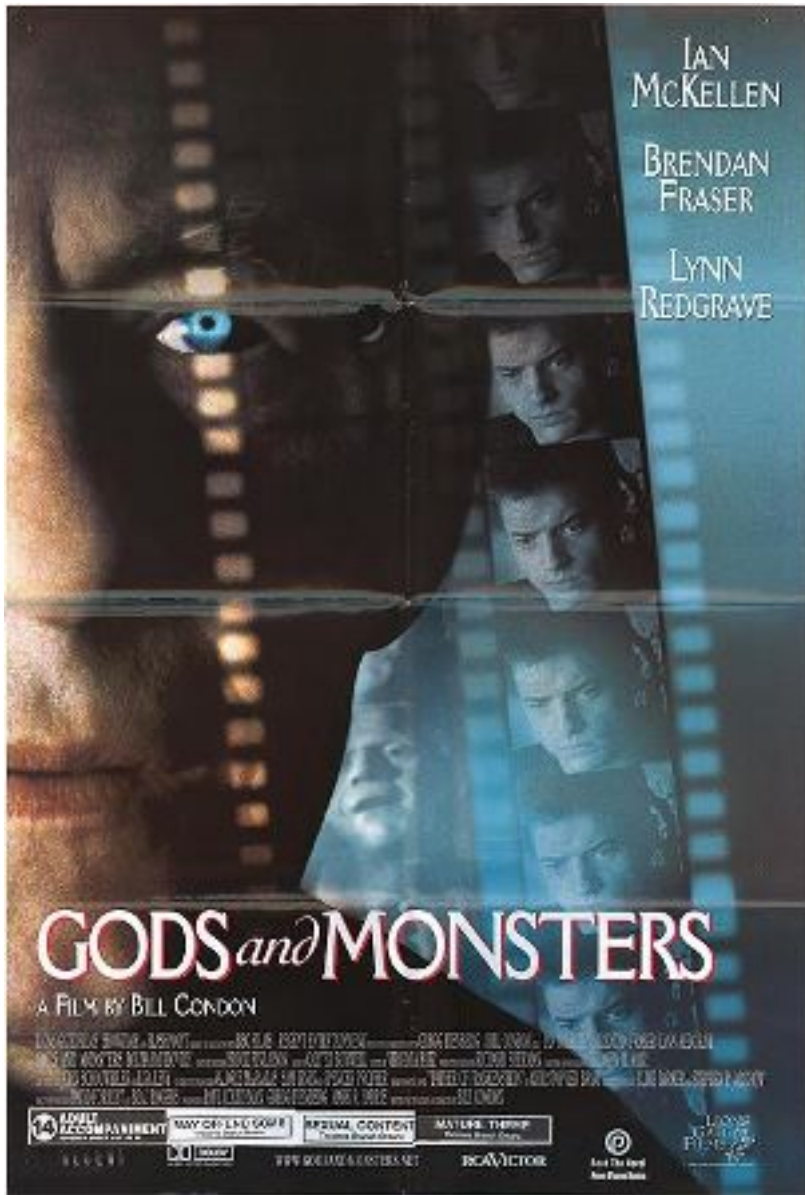
[“Europa Report \[22\]”](#)

Netflix Description:

In this nail-biting thriller, a private space-exploration company sends six astronauts to determine whether Europa, one of Jupiter’s moons, can sustain life — and what they find terrifies and transforms them.

Why:

Because while mainstream sci-fi this year (“After Earth,” “Oblivion,” “Ender’s Game”) kind of sucked, this indie flick reminded us what we like about the genre in the first place. It’s a simple film about sacrifice for greater scientific knowledge. It’s not perfect but there’s a low-fi charm to this piece in that it’s about the people traveling to the edge of the universe more than the special effects that get them there. Check it out.



Gods and Monsters

“[Gods and Monsters](#) [23]”

Netflix Description:

As his life draws to a close, film director James Whale — the openly gay genius behind *The Bride of Frankenstein* and *The Invisible Man* — befriends a gardener, and both men learn from their unexpected but platonic bond.

Why:

Because it should have won Sir Ian McKellen an Oscar. The man who would become Gandalf's best film role came in this beautiful drama and the actor was widely considered a frontrunner for the Academy Award before we all inexplicably fell in love with Roberto Benigni. McKellen and Lynn Redgrave were both nominated, and deservedly so, and the film won Bill Condon an Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay. In this season of Oscar bait, see an award-winner that you may have missed.



Hard Eight

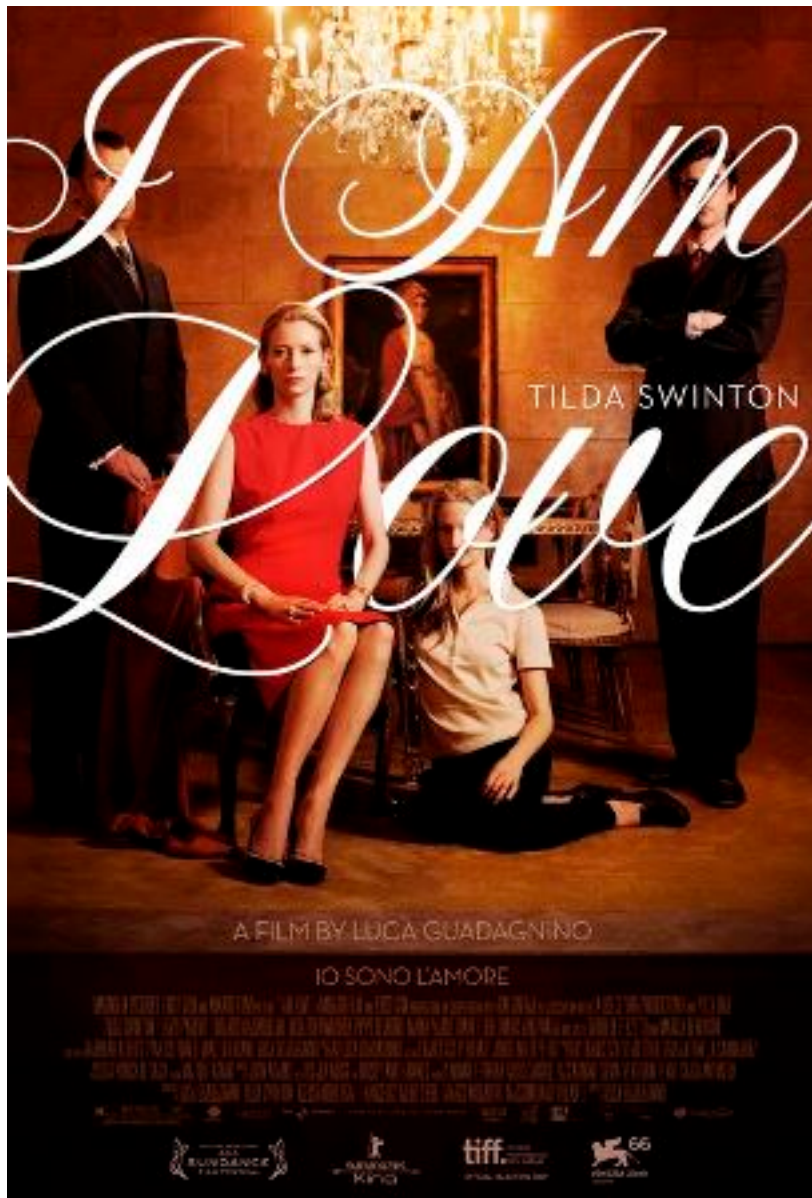
[“Hard Eight \[24\]”](#)

Netflix Description:

World-weary card shark Sydney takes reckless John under his wing after showing him how to exploit casino perks. The surrogate father and son are successful gamblers until John falls for a cocktail waitress and gets mixed up with a shady stranger.

Why:

Because you’ve probably seen all of the other Paul Thomas Anderson flicks already. The man who would go on to direct “Boogie Nights,” “Magnolia,” and “There Will Be Blood” started with this beautiful drama (called “Sydney” in many markets) that features one of John C. Reilly’s best performances. It’s a subtle, character-driven gem.



I Am Love

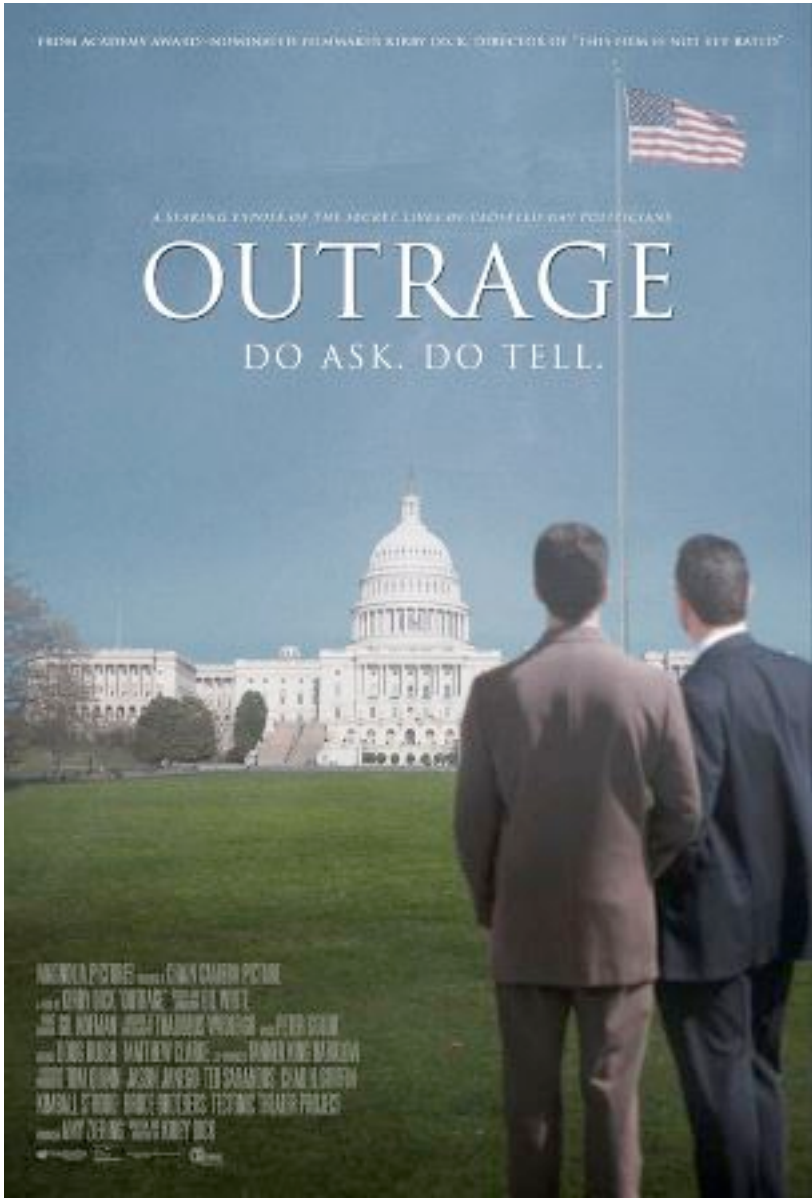
[“I Am Love \[25\]”](#)

Netflix Description:

Family dissension, unbidden desire and other tensions bubble to the surface during a patriarch’s birthday party. When the seemingly picture-perfect Recchi clan gathers to celebrate the man, the veneer of civility quickly falls away.

Why:

Because Tilda Swinton is one of the best actresses alive. This melodrama ultimately has a few too many soap operatic beats but it’s worth seeing for its gorgeous costumes, lavish art direction, and yet another stunning turn from Swinton, an actress who fascinates every time out.



Outrage

“[Outrage](#) [26]”

Netflix Description:

Oscar-nominated documentary filmmaker Kirby Dick sets out to expose the hypocrisy of gay politicians who passionately criticize the LGBT community in public while concealing their own sexual orientation.

Why:

Because it’s important. Kirby Dick’s controversial documentary doesn’t just out gay politicians but makes a convincing case that it is the very closeting of many of these gentlemen that has led to anti-LGBT laws being enforced. They feel shame over their own sexual orientations and take that out on the rest of what should be their community. It’s a riveting piece of work from one of our best documentarians.



[27]

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