



**HOWL (2011)**

★★★★★

**CERTIFICATE** - 15 (UK)  
**DIRECTOR** - Jeffrey Friedman  
**CAST** - James Franco, Mary-Louise Parker, Jon Hamm, Jeff Daniels, David Strathairn  
**RUNNING TIME (APPROX)** - 84 minutes

Review by Daniel May

As someone who has an interest in the Beat Generation, I was delighted to find that *Howl* was being released and shown at Cinema City this month. This feature focuses on the obscenity trial that surrounded the iconic and controversial poem *Howl and Other Poems*, which was written by one of the 20th Century's most celebrated poets, Allen Ginsberg.

Along with William S. Burroughs, Jack Kerouac and Neal Cassidy, Ginsberg was part of the 'Beat Generation' sub-culture movement of 1950s America.

Ginsberg was very strong in his opposing views on sexual suppression, militarism and materialism and support for homosexual rights and open

sexuality, both of which were extreme taboos in 1950s America.

Ginsberg put all of his "unconventional" views and thoughts into what was his first published poem, *Howl and Other Poems*, to the absolute shock and distaste of a conservative mainstream America. This distaste led to a San Francisco prosecutor arguing that the book should be banned due to what he described as '(its) filthy, vulgar, obscene, and disgusting language', which led to the monumental obscenity trial.

The feature is cleverly but eccentrically constructed into three separated intertwining parts: a documented interview with Ginsberg (James Franco) and how he came to write such a generation defining and controversial piece; the obscenity trial that arose from public reaction; and the main parts of the book told cleverly through artistically represented animation.

James Franco, once again, shows why he is such an amazing acting talent. If you watch any footage of Ginsberg, you will instantly see that Franco absolutely nails the part. The way in which

he impersonates Ginsberg's movements and the distinctive way he conversed is just astonishing. Credit must also be made to *MadMen's* John Hamm's portrayal of defence attorney Jake Ehrlich, who was the man instrumental in keeping *Howl and Other Poems* accessible.

If you are interested in Ginsberg, the Beat Generation or just American history for that matter, you should definitely make your way to Cinema City this March to catch a screening of *Howl*.

● Actor focus

**JAMES FRANCO**

For me, James Franco is one of the most fearless and uncompromising young actors operating in Hollywood today. Below are three of Franco's films I strongly suggest you watch or revisit this month:



**CITY BY THE SEA (2002)**  
 ★★★★★  
**CERTIFICATE** - 15 (UK)  
**DIRECTOR** - Michael Caton-Jones  
**CAST** - James Franco, Robert De Niro, Frances McDormand, Eliza Dushku  
**RUNNING TIME (APPROX)** - 108 minutes



**MILK (2008)**  
 ★★★★★  
**CERTIFICATE** - 15 (UK)  
**DIRECTOR** - Gus Van Sant  
**CAST** - James Franco, Sean Penn, Josh Brolin, Emile Hirsch, Diego Luna, Alison Pill  
**RUNNING TIME (APPROX)** - 128 minutes



**127 HOURS (2011)**  
 ★★★★★  
**CERTIFICATE** - 15 (UK)  
**DIRECTOR** - Danny Boyle  
**CAST** - James Franco, Amber Tamblyn, Kate Mara, Treat Williams, John Lawrence  
**RUNNING TIME (APPROX)** - 94 minutes

**CinemaCity**



The Tempest



Howl

**MAIN FEATURES**

- 4-10 MAR ANIMAL KINGDOM (15)
- 4-10 MAR INSIDE JOB (CERT TBC)
- 4-10 MAR HOWL (CERT TBC)
- 11-17 MAR THE TEMPEST (PG)
- 11-17 MAR ARCHIPELAGO (15)
- 11-24 MAR NORWEGIAN WOOD (CERT TBC)
- 18-24 MAR ROUTE IRISH (CERT TBC)
- 18 MAR YOU WILL MEET A TALL DARK STRANGER (CERT TBC)
- 25 MAR CAVE OF FORGOTTEN DREAMS 3D (CERT TBC)

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**CARMEN: THE ENDURING APPEAL OF THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR OPERA.**

Passion, jealousy and betrayal take centre stage at London's Royal Opera House in a spectacular production of the world's most popular opera: Georges Bizet's *Carmen*.

Now seen as one of the best-loved and most memorable titles, critics at *Carmen's* first performance in 1875 panned it, declaring it 'vulgar' and 'contemptible'. Bizet had put every ounce of his genius into the opera's creation, and its lukewarm reception was a bitter disappointment.



The criticism in part stemmed from *Carmen's* humble setting amid the gypsies and knife-wielding cigarette workers of Seville. At the centre of the musical drama is the fiery *Carmen*, a gypsy woman whose love is as fleeting as it is passionate. *Carmen* has a devastating effect on the men she ensnares, and as the opera begins she initiates an intense love-affair with army corporal Don José. Later, when she abandons him for her new conquest, the bull-fighter Escamillo, Don José's jealousy turns to rage. This time,

*Carmen* has pushed one suitor too far for her own good.

Now larger than life on the Big Screen and for the first time ever in spectacular 3D, the world's most popular opera is coming to Norwich.

*Carmen* is brought to life once more in a characteristically vivid and vibrant stage production by Francesca Zambello. Seville is recreated with ranks of soldiers, crowds of peasants, gypsies and bullfighters – as well as a

magnificent horse, a donkey and even some 3D chickens!

George Bizet died aged 36, on 3 June 1875, never knowing how popular *Carmen* would become. In October 1875 it was produced in Vienna, to critical and popular success, which began its path to worldwide popularity that has endured for 136 years.

**Cinema City**  
**SAT 5, THU 10, TUE 22 & WED 23 MAR**