

# agenda

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN...

Our Top Ten Culture Hits



## 1. WATCH

### Diane Kruger in **INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS**

German-born Diane Kruger has worked so hard to lose her accent that when Quentin Tarantino was looking for a German actress to play Bridget von Hammersmark, he nearly overlooked her. It's a good thing he didn't. As Bridget, the 1940s movie star-turned-spy, Kruger gets to show off some real talent (neither *Wicker Park* nor *National Treasure*, both 2004, did her justice). 'This is the first time someone gave me a part where I'm strong,' she says. 'To be handed intelligent dialogue was a new experience for me.'

Kruger left Germany for London when she was 15 to become a ballerina, but ended up modelling in Paris, where she met her ex-husband, actor-director Guillaume Canet. Now dating Joshua Jackson, the 33-year-old says she always thought movies were out of her reach.

So she probably never dreamed she would star in not one, but two movies alongside Brad Pitt. In *Basterds* Kruger reunites with her *Troy* co-star to bring down the Nazis. Although billed as a war epic, anyone who's seen anything by Tarantino will know to expect much, much more. - *Annemarie Luck*

### FAR FROM INGLORIOUS

Diane Kruger, pictured above with co-star Michael Fassbender, is receiving critical acclaim for her performance in Quentin Tarantino's latest film. Kruger teams up with Brad Pitt, who plays the leader of a group of Jewish-American soldiers called 'The Basterds'.

SCENE STEALER

## 2. CASE 39

**To sum up** Social worker Emily Jenkins (Renée Zellweger) thinks she's seen it all, until she takes on her 39th case: 14-year-old Lillith Sullivan (Jodelle Ferland). **Brace yourself** Bad things happen around Lillith, like people dying in mysterious and violent ways (one scene involving wasps is particularly chilling). Be prepared to get spooked. **Supernatural forces at work?** The entire set and much of the crew's equipment were destroyed when a special-effects fire got out of control. Another 'cursed' movie à la *Poltergeist*, perhaps? - *Lee-Anna Spurdens*



## 3. THE INFORMANT!

**To sum up** This is the true story of highly intelligent, bipolar businessman Mark Whitacre (Matt Damon), who blows the whistle on his company's price fixing. We watch as Whitacre goes undercover for the FBI and his bipolar disorder gets out of control. **Changing angles** This isn't director Steven Soderbergh's first foray into the arena of big business scams (he directed *Erin Brockovich* in 2000), but this time the mood is less serious with offbeat humour and a continuous narration of Whitacre's eccentric thoughts.

**Transformer** Remember those tabloid pics of Damon looking chubby a while back? His transformation into Whitacre was to blame. Damon got into character by putting on 13,5kg, growing a moustache, donning a hairpiece and dorky glasses. - *Zoë Henry and Annemarie Luck*

## 4. READ

### SHOOTING STAR

#### Peter Temple (Quercus, R125)

**To sum up** When 15-year-old Anne Carson is kidnapped, her wealthy parents call on disgraced police hostage negotiator Frank Calder to save the day. **Expect the unexpected** With fresh angles at every turn, bit-part characters that are as fleshed out as the principals and a snakes-and-ladders ending, Temple keeps your attention up until the final page. **The real deal** This is superb writing and a complex plot from one of the best thriller writers in the world. - *Jane Raphaely*



## 5. COUNTING SLEEPING BEAUTIES

#### Hazel Frankel (Jacana, R169)

**To sum up** A single tragic event tears apart a close-knit Jewish family living in

Johannesburg in the 1950s. **Multiple voices** The experience of the family's disentanglement is described through the eyes and voices of the women in the household - and each add their unique sprinkling of Yiddish, Sotho and Afrikaans to the narrative.

**Literary kudos** This is Frankel's debut novel and it was runner-up for both the UK Telegraph First Book Award and the European Union Literary Award in 2007. - *Zodwa Kumalo-Valentine*

## 6. THE AFRICAN BOOK OF DAYS

#### Julia Stewart (Shuter, R109)

**To sum up** Divided into 12 chapters, one for each month of the year, *The African Book of Days* captures the most interesting facts, natural wonders and defining moments of sub-Saharan African history. **No ordinary history lesson** Don't write it off as a book filled with staid historical facts - it's also full of fabulously fresh African trivia ranging from fashion (like the day supermodel Alek Wek was born) to film (the day *The Gods Must Be Crazy* was released) and politics. It'll definitely help you impress friends with your knowledge of the continent. **A note on the author** Though Stewart was born and raised in America, she has lived in five African countries, holds a master's degree in African studies and has written nine other books focusing on Africa. - *Eulogi Rheeder*



EDITED BY ANNEMARIE LUCK. COMPILED BY MELISSA ATTRIDGE, ROBYN ALEXANDER AND EULOGI RHEEDER

## 7. EAT

### PIGALLE MELROSE ARCH

Seared ostrich and lychee salad, and vermouth and scallop soup are just two of the creative dishes on the menu at Pigalle Melrose Arch. Following the success of Pigalle's Cape Town, Sandton and Bedfordview locations, this new restaurant overlooks Melrose Arch Piazza and features eclectic yet elegant decor. The best part? The secluded luxe gold couch next to the bar, perfect for a pre- or post-dinner martini. Melrose Arch, Corlett Drive, Melrose, 011-684-2711, [Pigallerestaurants.co.za](http://Pigallerestaurants.co.za).



## 8. LISTEN

### D7

Seven gorgeous men singing a cappella? Who'd say no to that? We chat to Cape Town's hottest new musical outfit. **Where does your name come from?** We took it from the musical term D7, or Dominant 7. It's a spine-tingling chord you can't help but be completely engaged by. And as it happens, there

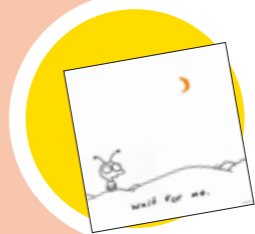


are seven of us in the group. **What makes your a cappella unique?** We make music that everyone - young or old - can enjoy: from school shoo wop to beat boxing and guitar riffs that we imitate using only our mouths. We reproduce songs by The Beach Boys, Michael Jackson, Black Eyed Peas, Kings of Leon and Goldfish. **Much of your success comes from live performances - do you plan on releasing an album?** There is no better feeling than the connection with the crowd during a live performance. But, yes, we plan on recording an album in early 2010. - *Eulogi Rheeder*

## 9. MOBY Wait for me (EMI, R170)

Calmer and moodier than anything Moby's done before, his new album catches you by surprise. Inspired by a conversation he had with film director David Lynch (who directed the video to the first single, 'Shot in the Back of the Head'), Moby set out to make a personally-fulfilling album, rather than focusing on commercial audience appeal. A brave move for any artist, but the risk paid off:

with soothing electronic sounds, uncomplicated beats and emotionally-wrought vocals, *Wait For Me* is intimate and refreshing. - *Eulogi Rheeder*



## 10. KASABIAN West Ryder Pauper Lunatic Asylum (Sony, R170)

'The third record is the one you're judged on,' says Kasabian's guitarist, songwriter and occasional vocalist Serge Pizzorno. If that's true, we're guessing this English electro-indie band is in it for the long haul. This time they've managed to outdo themselves with an album that's being hailed as epic - which is fitting, seeing as their aim was to make something that could pass for a movie soundtrack. Without losing any of their bravado or energy, they're less relentless and a little more vulnerable here, which gives the album more breathing space than *Empire*. We like. - *Annemarie Luck*

