

## The Main Feature



Issue Number 2 – 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007

# Pan's Labyrinth

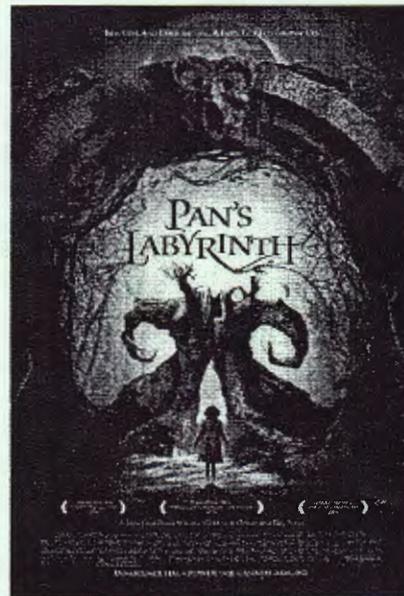
## El Laberinto del fauno

Ⓢ SPAIN/2006/119 mins

Written & Directed by Guillermo del Toro

**Ivana Baquero**  
**Sergi Lopez**  
**Maribel Verdu**  
**Doug Jones**  
**Ariadna Gil**  
**Alex Angulo**  
**Manolo Solo**  
César Vea  
Roger Casamajor  
Ivan Massagué  
Gonzalo Uriarte  
Eusebio Lázaro  
Francisco Vidal  
Juanjo Cucalón  
Lina Mira

**Ofelia**  
**Capitan Vidal**  
**Mercedes**  
**Pan/Pale Man**  
**Carmen Vidal**  
**Dr Ferreiro**  
Garcés  
Serrano  
Pedro  
El Tarta  
Francés  
Padre – Father  
Cura - Priest (as Paco Vidal)  
Mayor  
Mayor's Wife



A young girl, by the name of Ofelia, is sent in 1944, along with her ailing, pregnant mother to the Northern Navarra region of Spain where the Civil War, which officially ended 5 years earlier, is still raging against a determined group of rebels. They are going to live with her new Stepfather, Capitan Vidal, who is a vicious, cruel, totalitarian idealist who together with his fascist troops, must weed out the resistance fighters in the hills and woods

This is Del Toro's sixth feature and marks a return to the supernatural trappings and delicately shaded emotions of his 2001 ghost story "The Devil's Backbone." Like the earlier film, "Pan's Labyrinth" (with five credited producers, including del Toro's countryman Alfonso Cuarón) is set during the violent aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, and reveals a similar concern for the plight of children living under fascist rule.

The opening voiceover tells the myth of a princess who fled her underground kingdom to reach the human world, where she eventually died, leaving her father to pine for the return of her soul.

Ofelia isn't just having a bad day, she's having a bad life. Her country is war-torn with the fascist government battling the rebel marquis. Her father has died, a victim of the fighting. Her mother alone and unprotected, was forced to marry Captain Vidal and conceive his child. She is now nearing full term but the pregnancy is killing her. The potential of being left alone in the world with Vidal is enough to turn Ofelia's blood to ice.

One day, while exploring the terrain around her new rural home, she discovers an ancient labyrinth made out of huge slabs of rock. Within live creatures of myth: fairies and fauns. Ofelia learns an amazing thing: she is the long-lost princess, the daughter of the King of the Underworld. To prove her worthiness of this title, she must complete three tasks set out for her by the faun Pan (Doug Jones). If they are done before the next full moon, she will be welcomed into her kingdom.

Perhaps the film's greatest asset is the way in which it interweaves Ofelia's quests with the tale of the Spanish resistance fighters. Both are equally compelling. When one story is being told, we are sufficiently involved that we aren't anxious to return to the other. This is an achievement. Many films with "split personalities" invest all their creative energy into one aspect of the story, causing the other one to founder and feel obligatory.

Sergi Lopez and Maribel Verdú really drive the story in the historical drama scenes. Lopez is a fierce and terrifying guy but actually comes across as sympathetic in a couple of scenes. Verdu is incredible as Mercedes, the head housekeeper who is Ofelia's closest friend in the house. The scenes with these characters and the civil war subplot never fail to hold your attention. Ivana Baquero is excellent as the main character Ofelia, her performance is very mature and believable and she shares some beautiful scenes with her mother and Mercedes.

The winner of three Oscars and a plethora of other nominations and awards this Fairy Tale is definitely not one for the children. It is graphic and at times gruesome but brilliantly captures the tremendous imagination of a child. The film's tag line sums it up well:

Innocence Has A Power Evil Cannot Imagine

Hope you enjoy.  
Michelle



# News

**BBC NEWS**

## Royals pull out of film premiere

**The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall have pulled next month's Royal Film Performance amid controversy about the chosen movie, Brick Lane.**

It is the first time the annual gala has been scrapped since 1958.

Protestors claim the film, based on Monica Ali's novel, portrays residents of London's Brick Lane as uneducated.

A royal spokesman said the controversy had been taken into account, but it had also been impossible to find a date for the Prince to attend a screening.

Brick Lane, which was shortlisted for the 2003 Booker Prize, tells the story of a Bangladeshi woman sent to London for an arranged marriage.

Attempts to shoot the big screen version of the novel on the famous east London street last year sparked protests from residents.

### 'Beautiful film'

The UK premiere at the royal charity gala had been due to take place on 29 October.

Instead, the film, directed by Sarah Gavron, will now make its debut at the London Film Festival on 26 October.

A spokesman for Prince Charles said: "There has been quite a lot of controversy about that film which everyone was aware of.

"At the start, it had been one of a number of films proposed. None of the films and none of the dates worked."

Peter Hore, chief executive of the Cinema and Television Benevolent Fund (CTBF), which helps organise the screening, told reporters the cancellation would affect the charity's finances.

"It's the principle fundraising event for the CTBF so it does leave a gap in our finances," Mr Hore said.

He added: "Brick Lane [is] a beautiful film and one of the best independent British productions of the season."

"For whatever reason it no longer works in the Royal diary. The Prince's office has kindly offered to find a date in the new year."

The royals have been going to special screenings of films since 1896. Then, a number of short movies were on offer - including scenes showing a boxing kangaroo.

The Royal Film Performance was established in 1946 and has been held every year since, apart from 1958.

Last year, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh attended the premiere of Bond film Casino Royale, starring Daniel Craig.

To compensate for this year's event being shelved, it is hoped that two Royal Film Performances will be held in 2008.

Story from BBC NEWS:  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/entertainment/7012952.stm>

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## Reactions to ....

Notes on a Scandal – 13<sup>th</sup> September 2007

Score 0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10  
Votes ~    ~    ~    ~    ~    ~    2    10    12    6    ~

Total Votes - 30    Average Score – 7.73    Position in Season – 1<sup>st</sup>

Last Season Average – 6.714

Film	Score	Position
Notes on a Scandal	7.73	1 <sup>st</sup>

## Your views

A good start to the new season of films

An excellent start, wish we could see more films of this quality

Do start next year with a musical and have us go home singing!

Left feeling uncomfortable! Great acting by Judi Dench. Interesting subject matter.

Excellent except for cop out ending

Soul searing stuff

Judi Dench is amazing but really solid performances from everyone.

Judi Dench & Cate Blanchett both acting their socks off in thoroughly unpleasant roles – a real tour de force.

## Next Time

### 11<sup>th</sup> October 2007 – The Lives of Others

Before the wall came down in Germany, a high profile couple are placed under observation. The man tasked with spying on them thinks it will lead him up the career ladder, instead it leads him to challenge all that he believes in.

 GERMANY/2006/137 mins



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