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TV & MOVIES

Short Takes: Tilda Swinton impresses in 'I Am Love', Agnès Jaoui's 'Let It Rain' pleasantly low-key

BY ELIZABETH WEITZMAN, JOE NEUMAIER / DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS / Thursday, June 17, 2010, 8:09 PM

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HANDOUT

Tilda Swinton drops her native British tongue in favor of fluent Italian in Luca Guadagnino's film "I Am Love"

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I AM LOVE ****

An Italian family breaks apart. At area theaters (2:00). R: Sex, nudity. In Italian with subtitles.

Meryl Streep may have to up her game after seeing [Luca Guadagnino's](#) ambitious, sumptuously old-fashioned melodrama: Instead of relying on an accent to convey her character's nationality, [Tilda Swinton](#) drops her native language altogether.

The British Swinton plays a Russian immigrant who lives in [Milan](#), and she speaks fluent Italian throughout the film. Despite this considerable challenge, she's entirely believable as [Emma Recchi](#), a bright woman married into a wealthy, conservative Italian patriarchy. With grown children and a busy husband, she discovers her roles as wife and mother are no longer enough.

Though it's Swinton who grounds the film, Guadagnino is really telling the story of an entire family and their unquestioned way of life. Despite its flaws -- including an oddly unwieldy finish -- this is an epic project, crafted with intimate precision.

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EDITORS' PICKS

Leonardo DiCaprio may play Steve Jobs: report

A great job may put off Leonardo DiCaprio's "long break" from acting. The 39-year-old actor might be



'The Other Woman' premieres in Los Angeles

The stars of "The Other Woman" graced the red carpet in Los Angeles for the film's Tinseltown



'Game of Thrones' author distances himself from TV version rape scene

Sunday night's episode of "Game of Thrones" was hard to watch even for



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Documentary about the [Mormon Church's](#) anti-gay efforts. At [Chelsea Cinemas](#), Village East (1:20).

R: Language.

Combining investigative reporting with personal experience, [Reed Cowan's](#) impassioned documentary is unlikely to leave many dry eyes among its audience.

Cowan's subject is [California's Proposition 8](#) amendment, which restricts marriage to heterosexual couples. As narrator [Dustin Lance Black](#) attests, the resolution's success was enabled in large part by strenuous support from the Mormon Church.

Cowan, a gay Mormon himself, deftly melds facts with emotions, alternating between a history of the church's anti-gay drive and interviews with those directly affected by it. No matter what your stand is on gay marriage, you're bound to come out with a broader definition of family values.

STONEWALL UPRISING ***

Chronicle of a turning point in gay activism. At Film Forum (1:20).

NR: Mature themes.

This somewhat unfocused but still vital history lesson documents what one participant calls "another great step forward in the story of human rights."

Somehow, it's hard to believe the events chronicled here happened so recently, and so close by. But in June 1969, the Village became the center of a massive civil rights struggle when police raided the Stonewall Inn on Christopher St. As several interviewees recall, gays and lesbians then were treated as either mentally ill or criminal threats. So the invasion of a rare safe haven became a critical turning point.

Many witnesses offer emotional recollections of the ensuing riots, but equally powerful moments come courtesy of old footage, in which anti-gay "experts" expound with a confident ignorance that sounds chillingly familiar even today.

LET IT RAIN **

A group of people connect in Provence during a rainy summer. At the [IFC Center](#) (1:50). Unrated.

In "Let It Rain," a range of emotions -- big and small, dramatic and mundane -- fill a small town in Provence, whose denizens for one wet August week include Agathe, a [Paris](#) author-turned-politician visiting her family home; a filmmaker who plans to make a documentary about her, and Agathe's married sister, who's having an affair with the filmmaker.

It's the kind of roundelay that could easily veer toward farce or melodrama, but director Agnès Jaoui has a light touch and an ear for nonchalant conversations that spark a subtle change in plans. It's all a little insular and very conversational, but the setting is cozy and the performances all pleasantly low-key.

WAH DO DEM ***

A New Yorker gets lost in [Jamaica](#). At Cinema Village (1:26). NR: Drugs, language.

Ambling along at its own easygoing pace, this low-key indie from [Ben Chace](#) and [Sam Fleischner](#) derives its primary interest from an unlikely pairing of subject and setting.

When twentysomething Brooklynite Max ([Sean Bones](#)) wins a [Caribbean](#) cruise, he expects a fun week with his girlfriend ([Norah Jones](#), in a brief and



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Neil Young releases surprise album on vinyl

Neil Young has pulled a Beyonce. Sort of. The icon of the classic rock age blindsided everyone over



Emma Stone calls out boyfriend Andrew Garfield for sexist comment

Emma Stone and Andrew Garfield got in a tiny lover's spat during a recent



Netflix to raise price for new subscribers

Customers late to the binge-watching game at Netflix are in for an unpleasant surprise: a price hike. New subscribers



Lindsey Vonn, Elin Nordegren 'close friends': report

There's apparently no bad blood between the two women in Tiger Woods' life. His girlfriend Lindsey Vonn



Brian Williams raps to 'Gin and Juice'

Brian Williams has reprised his role as a rapper on Jimmy Fallon's "Tonight Show." The creative late-night host debuted a



Dean McDermott: Sex with Tori Spelling 'wasn't fantastic'

Dean McDermott admitted sex with wife Tori Spelling "wasn't fantastic," suggesting that's what led



Mayor de Blasio declares "Barbara Walters Day"

Barbara Walters and Michael Bloomberg had a long-running joke about running off and getting

uncomfortable cameo). After she dumps him, he takes off alone, only to find himself adrift amid retirees playing shuffleboard.

Before the trip is a total wash, though, he winds up lost in Jamaica, where he has to call on survival instincts he didn't even know he had.

Though the mumblecore esthetic is familiar and the movie's ultimate impact slight, the filmmakers do find a fresh and modestly amusing twist by tossing their hipster out of his natural habitat.

married - but it was Mayor de Blasio who stole the legendary TV host's heart



Jay Z's former producer hatched extortion plot: report

A collection of Jay Z's master recordings that had gone missing in 2002 was found in a California



LiLo adds drama with word of miscarriage on finale

Lindsay Lohan's OWN network reality show came to a dramatic conclusion Sunday, but her real-life



Bryan Singer sex abuse accuser names three more Hollywood bigwigs in lawsuits

The Nevada man who accused "X-Men: Days of Future Past" director Bryan



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