

BEATING THE LOCKDOWN BLUES WITH COPIOUS
AMOUNTS OF EXCITABLE CHAT!

AUTITUDE!



FABULOUS FIRST ISSUE!

INFO AND ADVICE!

TAKING THINGS LITERALLY!

SPECTRUM SINEMA!

AND
MUCH MORE!

WELCOME!

Welcome to the first edition of Autitude!

Autitude is a magazine for the autistic community which will feature an eclectic mix of articles, reviews, blogs, cartoons, photos and lots more. Illustrated and curated by the talented Ash Loydon, Autitude will be shaped by what matters most to you. Not only this, we will be showcasing the latest events and groups that you can take part in from the comfort of your own home.

Thanks to funding from the Scottish Government, Scottish Autism recently launched Winter Connections. The aim of Winter Connections is to reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness, which, let's face it, in light of the lockdown, many of us are experiencing right now.

Sometimes we all need someone to speak to. Scottish Autism has introduced 'Connect' where you can pick up the phone and speak with one of their Community Advisors. They are also running an Online Art Group, Mindful Autism Support Group with the wonderful Jonny Drury, Virtual Choir, Online Gaming Sessions with the fabulous Klepto Unicorn and a Bake-a-long!

You can find more information on all of these inside.

We hope this magazine brings a little bit of joy to your day. It will be released every four weeks and we need your contributions to make it happen! If you have something you would like to share please get in touch with us at autitude@scottishautism.org.

To make sure you are updated when the latest edition is released sign up here – thank you!

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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Space in your diary? Not for much longer!
Check out these groups and events.

WINTER CONNECTIONS EVENTS

Mindful Autism Support Group
Running every Thursday until 1st April (excluding 11th February)



Come along to a new Mindful Autism Support Group. The group will be delivered by Jonny Drury an experienced group facilitator, meditator and coach-mentor. He encourages mindfulness meditation as part of a whole system of self-care and personal and professional development.

The group will be running on Thursday's for autistic individuals and their families, aged 18+. Each session will take place via Zoom and they are free to join. The groups are limited to a maximum of 20 people, so don't miss out!

Register or find out more.



Online Art Group

Do you want to explore your creative side? Then join an online Art Group taking place every Wednesday, until 31st March, from 5pm-6.30pm.

The Art Group, for autistic people and their families, aims to bring people together for creative expression in an informal and safe environment. It offers the chance for a mindful break from the day's worries and can help to reduce stress.

The art group will be led by Scottish Autism's talented Support Worker Gabriele Gikyte, who has an academic background in art and experience of running a Virtual Art Group in Scottish Autism's services in Lothian. Each hour and a half session will explore an abstract but relevant theme which can act as guidance to start off the creative process.



Participants will be encouraged to view the theme through their own personal lens, brainstorming ideas and searching for ways to best depict their vision.

The first 5 themes we will explore are:

- Here and Now
- Safe place
- Tomorrow
- The Senses (vision, hearing, touch, smell)
- Balance

The sessions will run via Zoom so you will need a computer or device with good Wi-Fi. Cameras and microphones are preferred but not compulsory and please feel free to join in as many sessions as you like.

Find out more at www.scottishautism.org/events

Virtual Choir

Join this Virtual Choir and share music with others, in a fun no pressure environment. People listen to music for many different reasons, it can help you connect to your emotions as well as other people. Music is the one universal thing that connects us all around the world. During the lockdown we hope this group will help you feel less isolated as well as enhance your wellbeing and develop your confidence. The session is suitable for all ranges and abilities so don't worry if this is your first time singing in a group setting.

The group will meet every Thursday evening 5pm – 6pm using Zoom so we can all sing together from the comfort of our own homes. Feel free to join in even if it's just to chat and listen to others singing. We will learn a range of songs over the sessions. The songs will be chosen by you and you will be able to submit your favourite song or a song that means something to you when you register for the event



Here are some of the benefits you might experience from joining the group:

- Reduce stress
- Connect with emotions
- Improve memory
- Improve motivation
- Meet new people/build friendships
- Improve breathing
- Have fun

The group will run on Thursday's from 5pm –6pm until 25th March. Numbers will be limited to a maximum of 20 people so sign up quick!

Find out more.

Online Gaming Group

Are you an avid gamer? Would you like to connect with other gamers? Then join our Facebook Online Gaming Group and you'll be met by Klepto Un1corn, a video game streamer based on Facebook, who will invite you to the party!



The groups will take place fortnightly on Monday evenings until 29th March from 5pm until 9pm. This group is suitable for autistic people aged 18+ who have a facebook account, we also welcome individuals aged 16+ with parental consent.

Once you join the Facebook group, you will embark on a journey with your fellow gamers through the world of A Total War Saga: Thrones of Britannia. Learn about life in Scotland during the time of Vikings whilst journeying to change history and prevent Scotland from being pillaged by the invaders from the East.

So, pull on your chainmail jackets, grab your axe and your shield, string you bow and prepare for virtual war!

Through gaming we can stay connected, even if we can't in person. If you find yourself alone or isolated during lockdown and want a way to connect with others then swing by and join in the chat. Find out more.

To access the group first join the closed Facebook Group here.

Bake-a-long with Alan Ferguson

Passion fruit tart...sounds delicious doesn't it?

Learn how to make your very own in an online Bake-a-long with Alan Ferguson, Head Pastry Chef for Buzzworks Holdings Ltd.



Alan will show us how to make a passion fruit tart so that you can enjoy a restaurant quality dessert at home.

The method and ingredients will both be shared on Scottish Autism's social media channels beforehand so that you can prepare.

Tune in on Scottish Autism's Facebook Page on Friday 12th February at 7pm and Bake-a-long with others.

Find out more



SUPPORT & ADVICE SERVICES

It's normal to feel more down than usual at this time. Please don't struggle alone, there are services that can support you through this difficult time.

CONNECT

At Scottish Autism we understand that this is a challenging time for autistic people, their friends, family and carers. The Covid-19 outbreak is changing life for all of us, and this can be very stressful. Scottish Autism's advice line team are here to provide emotional and practical support.

We understand that many people may be feeling isolated from loved ones or due to social distancing aren't able to connect with people like they would usually. Feeling connected is important to us all, the advice line team can be on hand to provide regular conversation via a phone call, an email or even drop a post card in the mail.

Register for connect.

ADVICE LINE

Scottish Autism's Advice Line is here to provide emotional and practical support to autistic people and their families as well as those who identify as autistic or are currently seeking a diagnosis.

The team is made up a small number of Community Advisors that aim to provide an individualised response to each enquiry as quickly as possible. The team can also signpost to other resources and support services.

Our Advice Line is open:

Tuesday 10am - 7pm (phone line only will remain open until 7pm, LiveChat will close at 4pm)

Wednesday - Friday 10am - 4pm (phone line and LiveChat).

Call 01259 222022 or e-mail advice@scottishautism.org. You can also use an online contact form and an advisor will be in touch as soon as they can.

Please note that the advice line is not an emergency service. For anything urgent, please consider calling your local Social Work department, NHS 24 on 111 or the Samaritans on 116 123.

AFFINITY

Affinity provides free, personalised online support and development to autistic people and their families during Covid-19 and beyond.

Affinity is delivered by Scottish Autism in partnership with AT-Autism and a number of professionals and practitioners who will work with and alongside you, to address specific challenges, worries or concerns.

Affinity can offer support with the following:

- Assisted decision making; we will work alongside you to set goals that are meaningful to you and support you to take action to achieve these goals.

- To manage stress or problem solve; we will work with you to empower you to make the changes that are important to you.

To find out more about Affinity and accessing this service, please visit: www.scottishautism.org/affinity

NATIONAL POST DIAGNOSTIC SUPPORT SERVICE

The National Post Diagnostic Support Service aims to support newly diagnosed people across Scotland to understand and embrace their identity as an autistic person.

Funded by the the Scottish Government, this service is delivered in partnership with national charities; Scottish Autism, National Autistic Society Scotland, Autism Initiatives Scotland and Autistic People's Organisations Autistic Mutual Aid Society Edinburgh (AMASE), Autism Rights Group Highland (ARGH), Triple As and SWAN: Scottish Women's Autism Network (SWAN).

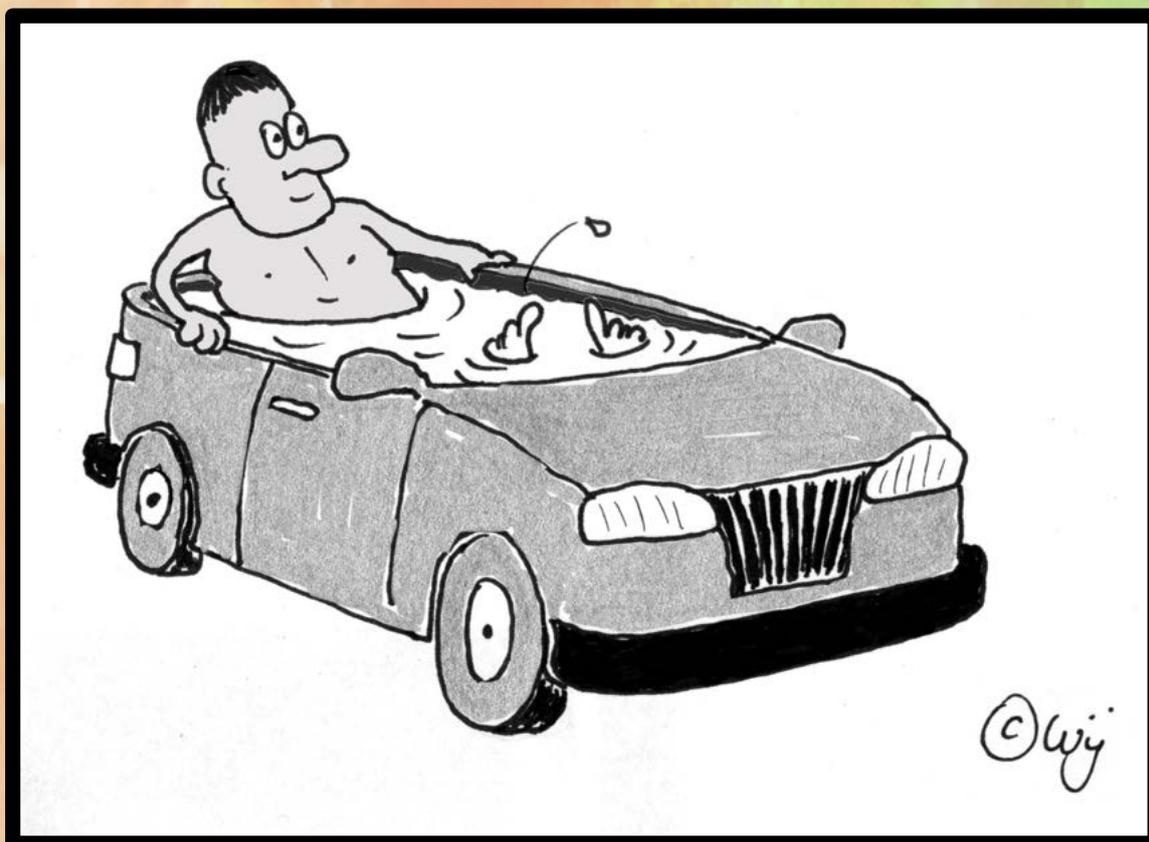
This service will focus on ensuring that autistic children and adults, as well as their families, are empowered with the information and support that they need after a diagnosis, whilst also providing autistic-led peer support.

The service will be piloted for six months and you can find out how to access support by visiting Scottish Autism's website here.

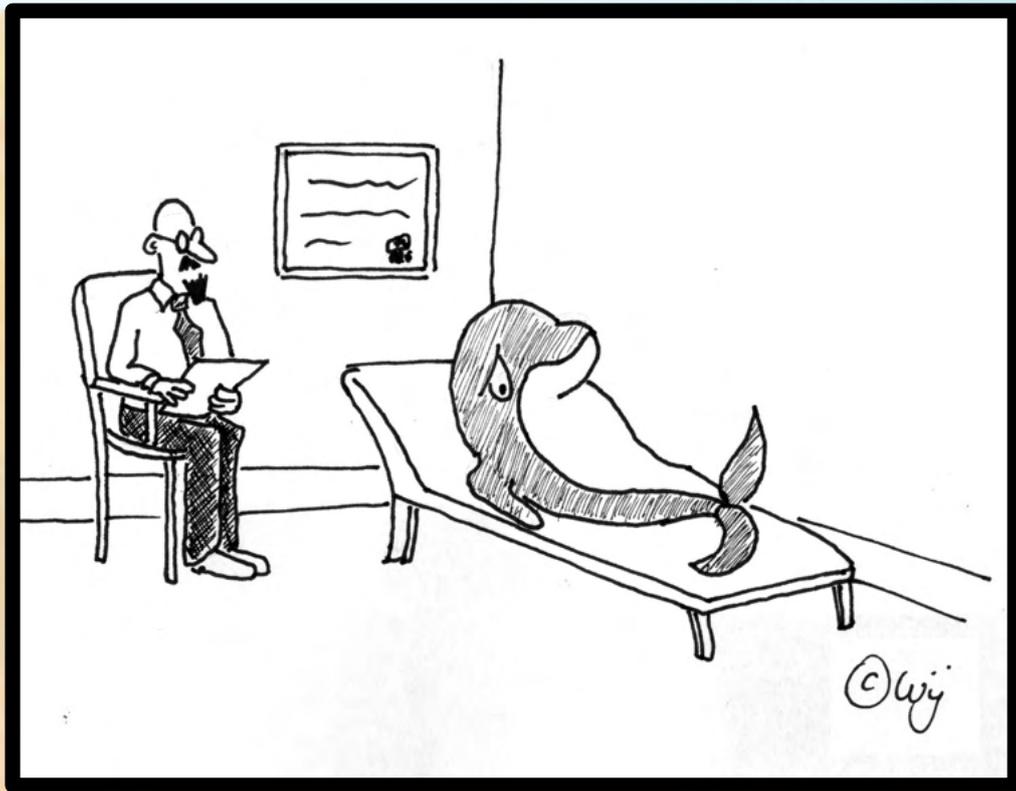
On a less serious note, Peter Vermeulen - Founder and Director of Autism in Context - has shared with us some cartoon illustrations titled

TAKING THINGS LITERALLY

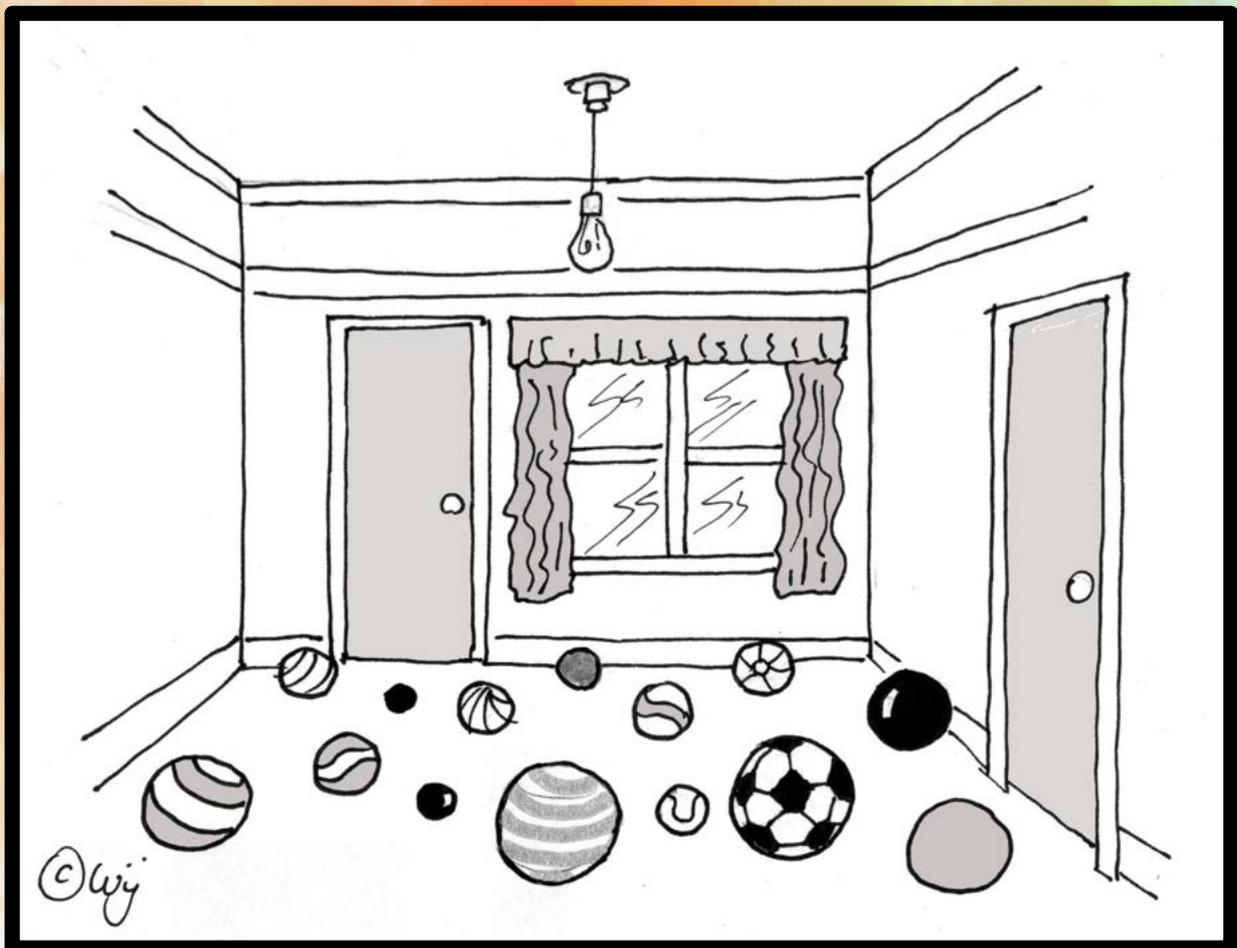
We hope these make you smile.



Carpool



Dolphin Therapy



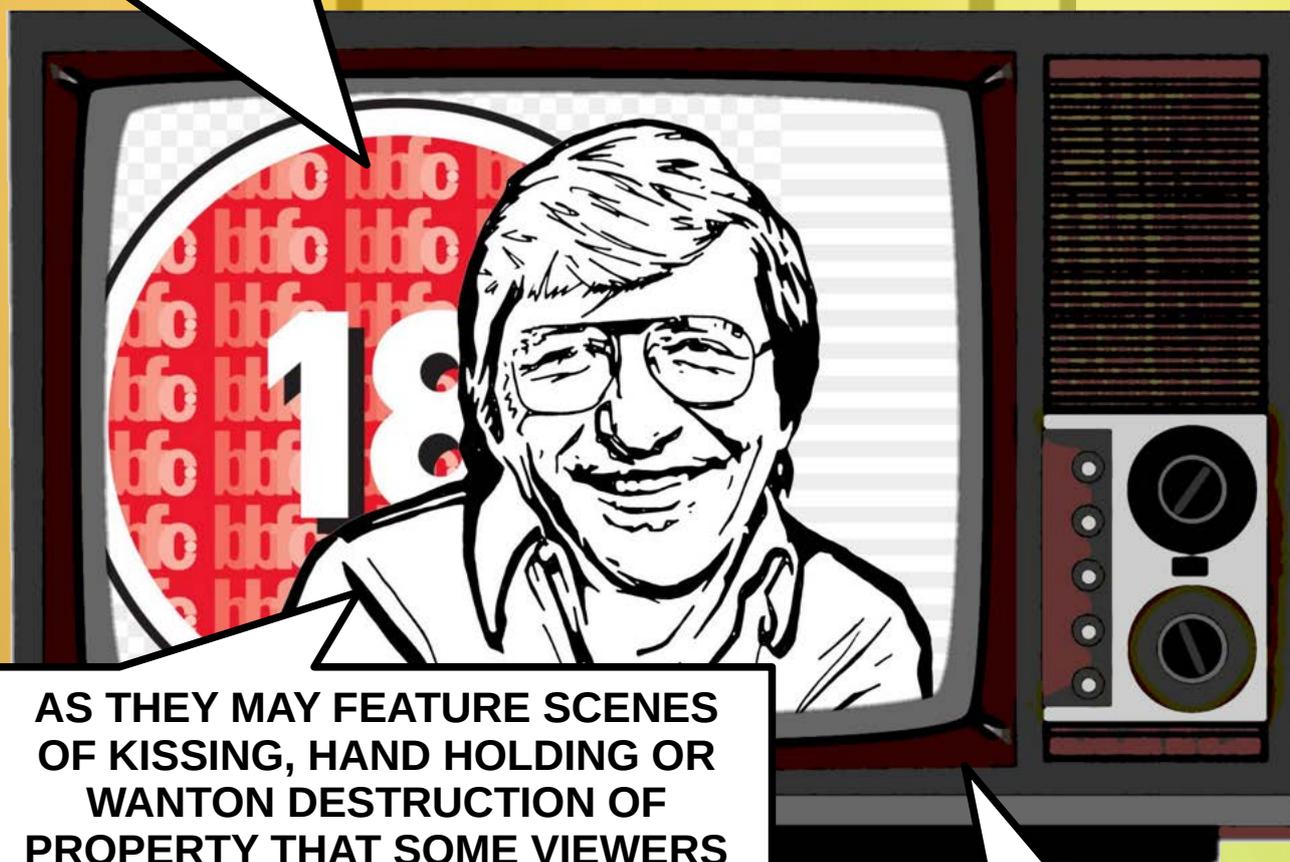
Ballroom

Before we embark on Ash Loydon's beginner's guide to

SPECTRUM SINEMA

We are legally obliged to issue this message from the housewife's favourite, Simon Bates.

THANKS ALL! JUST REMEMBER THAT SOME OF THE FILMS FEATURED OVER THE NEXT FEW PAGES MAY BE RATED 18, WHICH MEANS IT'S WRONG FOR ANYONE UNDER THAT AGE TO READ OR THINK ABOUT THEM...



AS THEY MAY FEATURE SCENES OF KISSING, HAND HOLDING OR WANTON DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY THAT SOME VIEWERS MAY FIND DISTURBING...OH YES AND A FAIR BIT OF VIOLENCE TOO.

AND WITH THAT OUT OF THE WAY, THANKS FOR LISTENING AND ENJOY THE REST OF THE ARTICLE.

A few years back I got into a discussion with my partner in crime (and token NT person in the house) about how most films dealing with Autism are pretty turgid affairs full of struggle, heartache and defying the odds to live a meaningful 'normal' life and how, occasionally it'd be cool to see someone on the Spectrum "blow stuff up".

After watching The Accountant I really should be more careful what I wish for.

After much chat, wine and more chat we came up with a handy guide to the best Spectrum-based cinema available that you may not have seen.

And more importantly not realized was actually Autism-centric.

It's not like anyone has much else to do right now is it?

DRIVE (2011) - Neo-noir thrills meet arthouse style in Nicolas Winding Refn's high octane heist classic.

**Ryan Gosling's uber-cool unnamed driver has become the unofficial hero of ASD in cinema, showing that characters on the Spectrum don't have to be geeky and freaky but can be not only super cool but 'a real human bean' too.....The Spectrum at it's sexiest.
And with a cool coat to boot.**

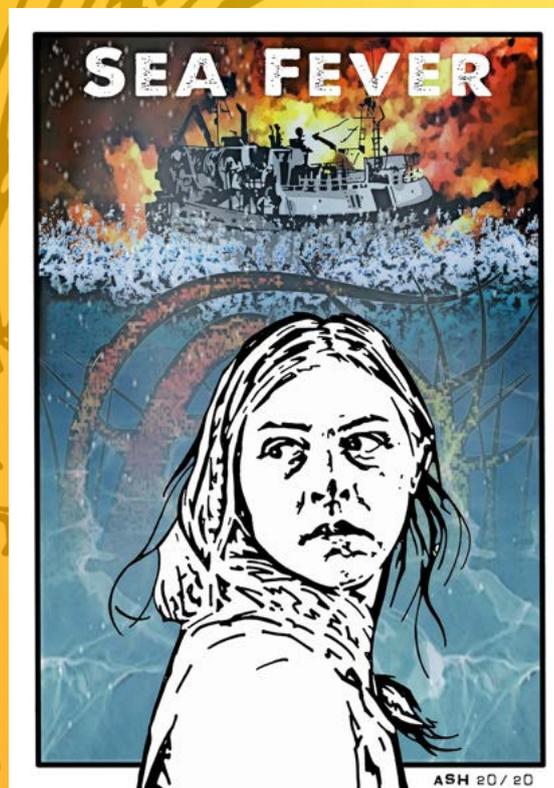
Talking of Ryan Gosling, between this, Blade Runner 2049 and Lars And The Real Girl he seems to be the go to actor in 'The Hollywood' for Autie-style action but the subtlest one must be LA LA LAND (2016) where Ryan plays an incredibly dreamy and uber talented Aspie guy named Sebastian who meets – and falls for - a ginger NT girl named Mia, teaching her single-minded determination and the history of jazz whilst in return she teaches him the neurotypical skill of heartbreak thru' the medium of song and dance.

DARK FLOORS (2008) - Finnish Eurovision stars Lordi write and star in probably the best Silent Hill adaptation ever made.

A creepy and kooky spookfest centering around Sarah, an Autistic girl residing in the decrepit St. Mary's Hospital.

When her concerned father attempts to take her home he inadvertently drops her crayons and in the confusion mixes the reds with the blue and yellow causing a portal to another dimension to open leaving a ragtag group of patients and staff fighting for their lives with only Sarah able to save them.

Luckily all the corridors are signposted.



More up to date is Neasa Hardiman's SEA FEVER (2020) which features an Aspie marine biology student - Siobhán - who has to endure a week on a ragged fishing trawler in order to complete her degree, much to her annoyance.

Her - and the crews - life is turned upside down tho' when a strange sub-aquatic life form ensnares the boat and slowly begins to infect members of the crew....

MANHUNTER (1986) - Michael Mann's adaptation of Thomas Harris' Red Dragon features the first appearance of not only Hannibal Lecter (or Lektor as he's known here) but of top FBI criminal profiler Will Graham, better known now - and officially an Aspie - thanks to the Brian Fuller TV show 'Hannibal'.

Smart, sexy and quite possibly the second blue-est film ever made.

But if it's family friendly fun you want why not try **CHARLIE'S ANGELS: FULL THROTTLE (2003)** - McG's action comedy sequel features the frankly magnificent (and undisputed king of the Spectrum) Crispin Glover as the Aspie hair obsessed Thin Man in a role gratefully expanded from the original, probably his greatest role outside 'Simon Says'.

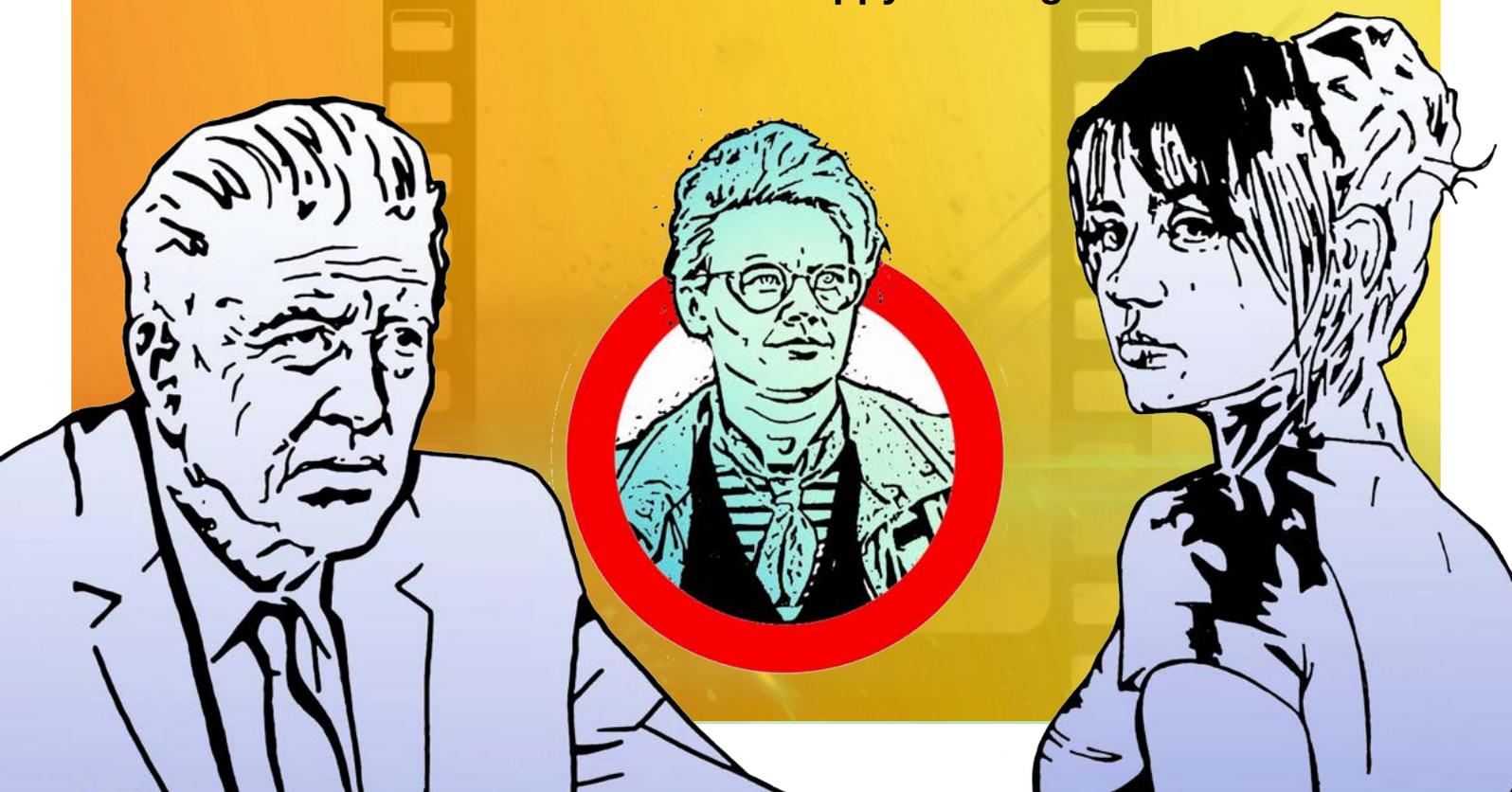
Oh, go on then....outside The Wizard of Gore remake.

Or maybe River's Edge.

or Willard.

This is only a small sample of the autie-centric delights awaiting you if you look (slightly) outside the cinema box, in the meantime we're interested in hearing yours!

Get in touch and happy viewing!



STARTING TODAY!

This amazing print out and keep guide to our favourite Spectrum Superstars! Why not nominate yours?

SPECTRUM SUPERSTARS!



Name: Christopher Gary Packham CBE

Age: 59

Height: 1.83 m

Occupation: Nature photographer,
television presenter, author, campaigner

AUTITUDE NEEDS YOU!



Well you've seen a sample of our Autitude goodness but what we really want is to see yours!

Got an idea for us? Maybe a recipe or a ramble? A story or pic?

Whatever you have send them to the editorial email autitude@scottishautism.org because we can't do it alone....our fingers will get tired for one thing!