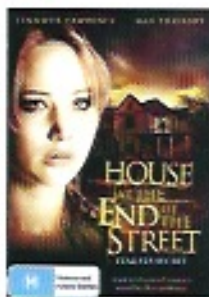


HOUSE AT THE END OF THE STREET

★★★



American actor Jennifer Lawrence has been hitting home runs ever since her Academy Award nomination for *Winter's Bone* (2010). From *X-Men: First Class* (2011) to *Hunger Games* (2012) to a second Oscar nomination for *Silver Linings Playbook* (see 'Film'), Lawrence climbs from strength to strength. That is, if you ignore direct-to-DVD and Blu-ray *House at the End of the Street*. Despite Lawrence's best efforts to bring the standard up to somewhere near bearable, the film suffers from contemporary horror's greatest flaw: story cliché. A recently divorced mother (Elisabeth Shue), and her angst-y teen (Lawrence), move to a new town for a fresh start. Everything is perfect. Except for the gruesome murders that took place in the huge empty house next

door. Story aside, Lawrence makes a fantastic final girl in her efforts to free herself from almost-boyfriend/psychotic stalker Ryan (Max Thieriot). For Lawrence, this isn't the absolute end of the street. Let's hope what's around the corner has that silver lining. **TARA JUDAH**

DOCTOR WHO: THE LEGACY COLLECTION SHADA

★★★★

As *Doctor Who* enters its 50th anniversary year, the BBC edges closer to making every surviving episode available on DVD. Now comes the DVD release of *Shada*, a story from 1980 that, notoriously, was never completed due to industrial action. Written by *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* creator Douglas Adams, the story has since become the stuff of legend, and is here presented with narration by (fourth Doctor) Tom Baker filling in scenes that never got filmed. Also on the disc is an animated version of *Shada* starring (eighth Doctor) Paul McGann, produced by the BBC in 2003. Finally, the three-disc set comes with *More than 30 Years in the Tardis*, a 1993 documentary celebrating the show's 30th anniversary. It's a little hokey at times, but also informative and affectionate, and a must-see for fans. This may sound like a box set of nothing but special features, but it's a great tribute to both the series itself and an unfinished story that would surely have been one of the show's best. **LEE ZACHARIAH**



THE HOUR: SERIES 2

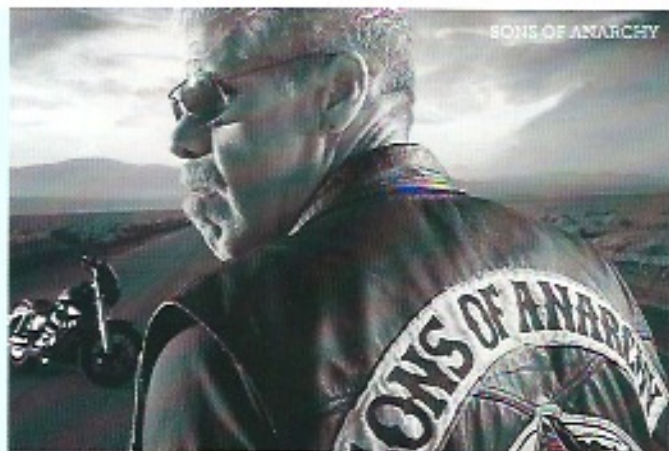
★★★★

It's 1957, and a year has passed since BBC current affairs program *The Hour* almost met its demise following an exposé of the previous government. There's now a new head of news (Peter Capaldi) and things seem to be getting back on track. Freddie (Ben Whishaw) is back, married, and is now *The Hour*'s co-host, while Hector (Dominic West) has taken to partying in Soho, where the sinister vice merchant Raphael Cilenti (Vincent Riotta) holds sway. Can producer Bel (Romola Garai) keep the team together with a rival network looking to poach her staff? And where do dodgy arms deals fit in with all this? The increased focus of this series on the characters' private lives does dilute the historical drama aspect a little, but that's no bad thing. As in the first series, the thriller angle remains the series' weak point while the cast (and clothes) are stand-outs. And though comparisons to *Mad Men* are increasingly ill-founded, it still certainly works on its own soap-opera level. It's a step up from the first series; fingers crossed there's a third. **ANTHONY MORRIS**



ANTHONY MORRIS → DVD Editor

CONFESSION TIME: I often won't start watching a television series until at least its second season. Make that "almost always". And even then I have to hear that the second series is an improvement on the first. Not for me this headlong rush to see a show as fast as possible to join in on the online conversations (or just to be able to read the overseas recaps). I have zero desire to get involved with a show before I know it's going to be worth my while. *Breaking Bad*? Didn't start watching until the second series was on DVD. *The Hour*? Ditto (see the review). *Spartacus*? Same deal. *Homeland*? I started watching the first series, then stopped, and didn't get back on the horse until the positive word came along for the second series. And what am I going to do now I'm hearing the second series went off the rails? Comedies are different: a funny episode is a funny episode. But with dramas, I don't want to get drawn into long-running plot lines or dramatic situations if the show is going to mess up down the line. There's nothing worse (okay, there are a million things



worse, but just go with it) than investing time in a drama then, two or three years later, realising that you just don't care any more. Every year, when the first few episodes of *Dexter* come out, people say: "Hey, it's back on track!" No, it's not. Let it go. It's not like there's a shortage of quality drama out there, so why take the chance on a show breaking your heart? I'm looking at you, *Sons of Anarchy*...