

was noticed by Stephen Frears, director of *The Queen*, that things really started to happen in earnest.

In a perfect stroke of casting, Frears gave Barden the role of Jody in last year's bucolic adaptation of Posy Simmonds' beloved graphic novel, *Tamara Drewe*. She shines as the mischievous, celebrity-obsessed teen with a knife-sharp tongue and a taste for trouble, and the film is worth watching for her performance alone. *Tamara Drewe* didn't do particularly well, perhaps on account of its specificity—there are only so many people interested in the minutiae of the lives of those who dwell in the blue-blooded British countryside, after all. But one gets the impression that Barden's next project—*Hanna*, director Joe Wright's tale of a teenage assassin, played by Saoirse Ronan, (out this month)—will fare far better. It is quite brilliant: action-packed, emotional, beautifully shot (Wright also directed *Pride and Prejudice* and *Atonement*), and as Sophie, a tourist traveling with her family who befriends Hanna on her mission to freedom, Barden balances a comic performance with more tender moments, going head-to-head with Ronan, whether they're talking by flashlight in a tent or fleeing for their lives.

"Just before we filmed *Hanna*," Barden says, the words tumbling out at 100 miles an hour, "I'd been in the West End performing with all these adults [she played Pea in Jez Butterworth's *Jerusalem*]. I hadn't really been with anyone my own age for four months, so going to Morocco and being with Saoirse was great. I felt like we were kind of the same—no offense, Saoirse—and actually, she'll take this as a compliment, but we were both a bit weird. We both really like Lady Gaga, and we'd sit on set between takes in the 50-degree [Celsius] heat, with everyone else saving energy because

of heat exhaustion, and we'd both suddenly burst into 'Poker Face.' It was really nice to go and be an idiot again after the theater."

While her roles so far have erred on the side of comedy, her next, indie horror movie *The Dark Half*, in which she plays the lead role, takes her to a more sinister place. "The part was completely different," she says, "but so was the way we shot it. No trailers, no toilet even, but I really liked it. With *Hanna*, it would be, 'We're just going to get a plane to Morocco,' but with this, it would be, 'We need to find a car from somewhere because ours got stuck in the mud on the hill.' I feel really lucky because if I'd gone to drama school, I might have thought *Hanna* was what films were always going to be like, so I've just done it backwards." She smiles and reclines back into the couch for a moment before quickly leaning forward again. "In both *Hanna* and *Tamara Drewe*, my parts were quite over-the-top, and I'm quite like that in real life, so I had started to think, Well maybe this is all I can do. But with *The Dark Half*, I'd wake up at 5 a.m. and wouldn't finish till nine at night because I was in every scene and all day I'd be doing horrible things."

So, what's next for Barden? She grins. "My dream would be a musical with Liza Minnelli, where I play Elizabeth Taylor."



paradise

Those who yearn for a movie experience that doesn't

involve painfully long previews or embarrassing 3-D glasses are in luck. London's Fashion in Film Festival: *Birds of Paradise* runs from April 15 through May 2 at the Museum of the Moving Image in Queens, New York, screening a collection of underground films displaying some of the 20th century's most impressive costumes. Classics such as *Salomé* (a 1923 adaptation of the Oscar Wilde play) will be shown alongside campy melodramas like Robert Siodmak's *Cobra Woman*, which boasts designs by the famed Hollywood costumer Vera West. The presentation of the 1928 silent film *Secrets of the East* will even feature live piano accompaniment.

CAITLIN SMITH



SOUNDCHECK

tune-yards

whokill

4AD

Ramshackle songstress Merrill Garbus may have recorded *whokill* with upgraded gear, but the next act of her (mostly) solo project doesn't diffuse intimacy or needlessly sand down edges. A follow-up to 2009's lo-fi *Bird-Brains*, this album's palette of splotchy beats, horns, and bent ukelele is just as charming in higher resolution. But the music has nothing on Garbus's show-stopping, androgynous voice. From quietly confessional to sugary sweet in overdubbed harmony ("Doorstep"), then at times approaching a feral David Longstreth, it's off-kilter and constantly surprising, spouting lyrics that reveal sharp character details. While her songcraft has evolved, Garbus hasn't forgotten the power of spontaneity. PATRICK SISSON



ALSO SHOWING

soul surfer

It was the news story heard around the world. One day in 2003, 13-year-old Hawaiian pro surfer Bethany Hamilton was having a normal day out on the waves when she was attacked by a tiger shark and lost her arm. Everyone assumed Hamilton's promising career was over, but she proved doubters otherwise. *Soul Surfer*, starring AnnaSophia Robb, documents Hamilton's inspiring story, covering not only the facts, but also the less-sensational stuff, like how the accident affected her friendship with fellow surfer Alana Blanchard (Lorraine Nicholson), and how a church trip to Thailand changed everything. Although the religious undertones can be slightly overbearing, they're balanced out by awesome surf scenes set against the gorgeous Kauai Coast: Completing the circle, Bethany Hamilton herself performed most of the stunts. LIZA DARWIN

stylist: lauren grant. hair: selena middleton at soho management using kiehl's since 1851. makeup: liz dakauer at caren. thanks to susan irving. top by bdg, shorts by koshing, necklaces by laura lee, bracelets by urban.outfitters and mademelli.