

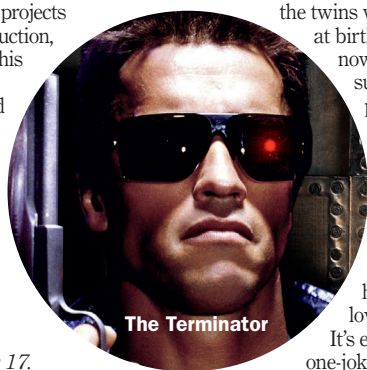
Arnie's greatest hits

After a decade in politics, everyone's favourite movie meathead returns to cinemas this week in *The Last Stand*, his first lead role since 2002. To celebrate, **Rob Garratt** rounds up **Arnold Schwarzenegger's** memorable moments

'Arnold Schwarzenegger is a good actor.' Utter that sentence in the company of film buffs and expect to be shot down in flames. Type that sentence into Google and expect to find just a handful of pertinent responses – most of them angry bloggers berating others for thinking Arnie is a good actor.

Yet we'd be lying if we said we hadn't missed *The Governator*. Effectively retiring from Hollywood with 2002's *Collateral Damage*, Arnie was (perhaps wisely) absent from cinema screens following his 2003 election as the 38th governor of California. During his two terms and eight years in office he did a couple of voiceover jobs, a CGI cameo in 2003's *Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines*, and an unaccredited turnout in Sly Stallone's '80s action hero ensemble flick *The Expendables* (2010). But after reprising his role – this time credited – in last year's *Expendables* sequel, Arnie is most definitely back (sorry) this week, taking his first post-politics lead role as Sheriff Ray Owens in *The Last Stand*, a by-numbers action showdown set on the Tex-Mex border.

It looks like we'll be seeing a lot more of Arnie from now on: the 65-year-old has at least four more projects currently in post-production, as well as confirming his participation in a fifth *Terminator* movie and a sequel to laugh-fest *Twins* (inventively titled *Triplets*). So to celebrate Arnie's triumphant return, we size up the greatest moments of (arguably) the world's worst actor. *The Last Stand* is in cinemas from January 17. Read our review on page 64.



The Terminator

subtle) sequel, *Judgement Day*, rank among the best sci-fi movies of all time. Has there ever been a one-liner so timelessly lacking in wit than 'I'll be back'?

Predator (1987)

Big Arnie straps on the military hardware for a rumble in the jungle with a merciless, camouflaged alien. A routine operation turns into a fight to the death when Arnie's crack platoon is picked off one by one by an invisible adversary, which then makes itself visible, removes its protective helmet and challenges him to a 'fair' fight. With its stilted dialogue and hammy acting, the film has the look of an expensive production but the feel of a B movie, delivering the sort of undemanding monster mayhem that Arnie fans adore.

Twins (1998)

Tailor-made for Schwarzenegger and Danny DeVito, this slick comedy about a pair of genetically engineered twins works – bizarrely – when the odd couple parody their familiar personae and play off one another. The result of a scientific experiment where the twins were separated at birth, Arnie is now a naïve and super-intelligent puritan, DeVito a small-time hustler. So when Arnie finally tracks down his long-lost brother, it's hardly fraternal love at first sight. It's essentially a one-joke scenario, but Arnie reveals a reasonable talent for light comedy.

Kindergarten Cop (1990)

The trouble with comedy-thrillers is that while they're sometimes funny, they rarely thrill. Ivan Reitman's film gets closer than most, although the fact that the film works at all is down to Big Arnie. Reitman cannily exploits and debunks the Schwarzenegger



The Last Stand



Twins

screen persona far more successfully than in *Twins*. Establishing him as the meanest cop on the block, and faced with the kids from hell, Arnie has never been so helpless or so funny.

Christmas in Connecticut (1992)

Props to Arnie for wrongfooting us with his only stab at directing a feature film to date: who would have predicted that a man whose typecast is a near-mute, leather-clad Teutonic killing machine would have opted for a treacle-smothered Christmas movie? It's a remake of a 1945 Barbara Stanwyck vehicle about a hot cookery writer (Dyan Cannon) and her corny

shenanigans with a swarthy forest ranger played by Kris Kristofferson.

True Lies (1994)

Reunited with James Cameron for far lighter, faster and cruder fare, Arnie plays Harry Tasker, a special agent up against a terrorist group that plans to steal a nuclear warhead – but Harry hasn't told his wife (a feisty Jamie Lee Curtis) what he does. The film's entire middle section is devoted to this marital 'crisis' which, thanks to Curtis's enthusiastic turn, is quite amusing. Happily, the last 40 minutes pick up with a feast of neck-breaking, torso-blasting violence. All titles available at www.amazon.com.

► **NEXT WEEK:** To mark the delayed release of *Gangster Squad*, we pick out our favourite mob movies