

Outside the Law

15, 139 mins
★★★★☆

13 Assassins

15, 126 mins
★★★★☆

My Dog Tulip

12A, 83 mins
★★★★☆

Flying Monsters 3D

PG, 40mins
★★★★☆

Everywhere and Nowhere

15, 94mins
★★★★☆

Jig

PG, 90mins
★★★★☆

Outside the Law exposes France's old colonial sores, but it is also a thriller with a fast pace, mostly set in the late 1950s in the red light district of Pigalle and shanty towns around Paris. Algerian immigrants in fedoras and wide-lapelled suits behave like mafia dons — except that their purpose is political. Rachid Bouchareb's fascinating film tells the story of three brothers who witness massacres in French-occupied Algeria, and end up running the underground independence movement. Each brother's reason for moving from pacifism to terrorism is different: one is a spivvy boxing and club promoter; another an ex-army revolutionary; and the third a ruthless, principled man of ideas. Like any mafia film, this tries to show the family life of the protagonists. In her shack, the brothers' mother keeps a small bag of soil from her lost farm back home, and there are

weddings and beautifully lit, atmospheric scenes.

As samurai movies go, **13 Assassins** is a bloody stunner, ending with 45 solid minutes of swordsmanship. The epic fight is ingenious and apocalyptic, as 13 samurai face up to 200 enemy soldiers in a boobytrapped village. Heads actually roll, and gore spurts like light rain. Fans of the cult director Takashi Miike will adore this festival of grotesque, but ordinary folk may not have the stomach for it.

"Unable to love each other, the English naturally turn to dogs," says J. R. Ackerley at the beginning of **My Dog Tulip** (pictured), a dry-witted, eccentric animated film. Based on the 1956 book about a dusty writer's relationship with a rescued alsatian bitch Tulip, the film is illustrated with exquisite watercolours of London streets and Ackerley's home. More like a *New Yorker* cartoon than *Marley and Me*, this is for the hardcore dog lover.

Flying Monsters 3D recreates airborne dinosaurs as you have never seen them, in multicolour, looming out of the screen. David Attenborough is our guide to the pterosaurs of old. Young dinosaur addicts will love this, although the 11-year-old *Avatar* fans with me expected more thrills.

Everywhere and Nowhere is all over the shop, exposing the cultural clash between a strict Pakistani family in London and a student who wants to become a DJ. With an ill-written, cliché-per-minute script, the issues that might have made a compelling story are wasted.

Jig documents the bizarre world of competitive Irish dancing, on a roll from *Riverdance*. Child performers from Ireland, New York, Holland and even Russia converge on the world championships in Glasgow. The dancing is extraordinary, the costumes are taste-defying. The film sags an hour in, but the dancing never flags. **KM**

