

# ENTERTAINMENT

VOL. 38 | NO. 43 | FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 2006

TODAY



## THE CHANGING FACE OF ECHO PARK

*Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland were the first Caucasians on their block. Five years later, they've made the film Quinceañera dramatizing the gentrification of a Latino neighborhood, exploring both gay and ethnic issues in the process.*

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**PLUS:** Talladega Nights, The Night Listener, Changing Times, concert reviews on CSYN and Redd Kross, the Mel Gibson mess, and more!

## THE DESCENT

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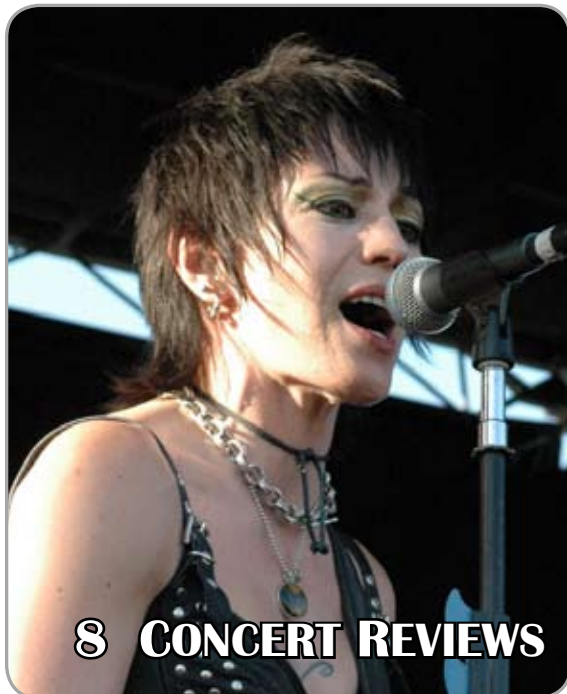
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## Theater Review

# Bluebonnet not quite on it



TicketHolders with  
Travis Michael Holder

FDR is just being inaugurated for a fourth time as Helen Burke (Leslie Cohen), a wisecracking Manhattan journalist, motors west for a new job. A minor car accident strands her at *Bluebonnet Court*, a ramshackle motel on the outskirts of Austin, Texas. With a local mechanic on the case who isn't exactly in a hurry, Burke moves into the motel and immediately finds herself under the scrutiny of the owners, a troubled young couple who look upon Helen's manner of dress as if she landed from another planet.

Not only is Helen Jewish, she's a lesbian prone to wearing pants and checkered blazers that might be fit for Bogie playing a crook on the run. In rural Texas in 1944, Helen's attire and her Glenda Farrell, side-of-the-mouth delivery create all kinds of curiosity, leading to many questions and a search of her room by the proprietor's wife. Yet in an era when one might expect a butch and roaming-eyed journalist to be run out of town or buried behind a barn, Helen's presence instead unearths more small town secrets than Allison MacKenzie's in that famous old novel by Grace Metalious, *Peyton Place*.

*Bluebonnet Court* features a knockout cast, including Jamey Hood and Jonathan Nail as the motel's *Hee Haw*-reject owners, Dalila Ali Rajah, Michelle Merring, and Jeanne Simpson. The set by Joel David, costumes by Shon LeBlanc, and lighting by Kathi O'Donohue are all the best that L.A. theatre has to offer, but something keeps *Bluebonnet*

*Court* from making the impression it might have. That something is Zsazsa Gershick's play, so improbable and predictable that, no matter how much talent this production has gathered to make its debut, it's all for naught.

Gershick certainly had the right motives, committed to exploring a period in American history when we fought the Nazis but had no inkling what the term civil rights meant for our own citizenry. *Bluebonnet's* alcoholic owner and former infantryman Roy (Nail) casually uses the "N word" right in front of black housekeeper Orla Mae (Rajah), and wonders aloud to Helen (tagged by Roy with the "N word"), "What was I fighting for over there? So your people can rule the world?"

The play brings up some fascinating themes to ponder — one character prophetically observes: "The Japs have been cleared and it's about time we look around for a new enemy." But Gershick's writing is about as subtle as a brick through a window and as preposterous as a movie made for the Sci-Fi Channel. And the play's lack of subtlety is exacerbated by Kelly Ann Ford's direction, which insists every line she (or Gershick) deems

important be delivered directly out front, to some imaginary place just above the back row of the audience, in case we're too dumb to get it any other way.

By the end, we learn that Helen was never alone with regard to her sexual identity, as it appears almost everyone is gay in this bucolic community — except the local nympho-librarian Nanalu (Merring), who is rewarded for her heterosexuality with



Leslie Cohen as Helen Burke and Delila Ali Rajah as Orla Mae

## Theater Review

# Bowl alive with *Sound of Music*

by Tony Medley

I've seen *The Sound of Music* so many times, both on the stage and the movie, that I could probably be cast in any role and know the lines. But most people know it through the movie, and the movie and the play have distinct differences, one of which is different music. After Oscar Hammerstein died and the movie deal was made, Richard Rogers dumped two songs from the play and wrote new ones. It wasn't a good idea. Dropped from the second act, was "No Way to Stop It," a charming song sung by Captain von Trapp, Max Detweiler, and Baroness Elsa Shraeder as Max is trying to convince the Captain that

he doesn't have to bow his head, just "stoop a little" to the Nazis. You won't hear this in the movie, so it's a delight to hear it again on stage.

Another song Rogers replaced was the love song, "An Ordinary Couple," a duet between Maria (Melissa Errico) and the Captain after they declare their love for one another. Rogers never liked it, so when he had the opportunity, he jettisoned it for a new song, "Something Good." My feeling has always been that "Something Good," while tuneful, is too pedestrian and self-centered, talking about Maria having done something good to deserve the Captain. "An Ordinary Couple,"

with its delightfully sophisticated antipodal approach (they are certainly not an "ordinary" couple) and better melody, seemed much more romantic to me. These decisions suggest to me why Rogers never approached the same lofty heights after he lost his lyricist, and emphasize the value of words to a song.

The movie also moved songs. In the play, "The Lonely Goatherd," is a yodeling song that Maria sings to the children in her bedroom in the first act. In the movie it was moved to the second act in order to introduce Bill and Cora Baird's puppets.

see **SOUND OF MUSIC** on p. 15



Jonathan Nail as Ray threatens Leslie Cohen in Zsazsa Gershick's Bluebonnet Court

a gang rape and premature death that left me whispering to my companion, "Why, what a surprise!" As for the others, well, the ultra-bigoted Roy eventually confesses having a love affair with his brother-in-law and Lila tries to feel up Helen under the popcorn box at the local movie house (a refreshingly fun and show-stealing turn by Hood). Even their verbally abused and overworked servant loses her Clark Kent glasses and starts wearing pants herself, finally going off to Hollywood hand-in-hand with Helen.

Granted, *Bluebonnet Court* has a lot to say about the struggle for gay and civil rights, but those would be more effectively presented without Gershick's verbal bulldozing. The audience is unfortunately tuned out long before Helen and Orla Mae hit the proverbial road to L.A. and some much needed enlightenment.

The Hudson Mainstage is at 6539 Santa Monica Bl., Hollywood. For tickets, call (323) 960-7721.

Travis Michael Holder has been writing for ET since 1990. Also an award-winning actor, he has authored five plays produced in LA, including *Surprise Surprise*, soon to be a feature film. His first novel, *Waiting for Walk*, will hopefully be published before he jettisons his corpulent frame off the Hollywood Sign.

## Travis' Critic's Picks:

Oklahomo!  
Third Stage

The Reunion  
Howard Fine Theatre

tick...tick...BOOM!  
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### Theater Review

## High marks for *Reunion*

by Travis Michael Holder

With confessed deference to the clever wonders of *Tamara*\*\*\*, where audience members followed actors from room to room, TheSpyAnts Theatre Company has taken the concept to the grounds of the San Fernando Valley's fictional Woodrow Wilson High. In *The Reunion: Everything Changes, Everyone Stays the Same*, the audience once again becomes part of the action, asked to attend the high school reunion of the Class of 1984 and spy on those students who had the *cojones* to return and face their incredibly messed-up classmates ten years later. These folks have enough residual damage to keep their psychiatrists in tee-off fees for years.

Co-directors and writers Darcy Halsey and Danny Parker do an impressive job weaving the characters' stories together, masterfully adding a few surprises as audience members hop from patio to kitchen to bathroom. The cast is golden, with nods to Ryan Churchill's animated class clown, Linc Hand's broken former

football hero, and Dawn Merkel's turn in the kitchen swallowing too many psychotropics. Every actor keeps it real despite the need to talk and move at once. Like *Tamara*, there's not time to unravel all the mysteries in one evening, making this is a production worth a second, or third, or even fourth look — and that big red star stamped on your program/report card (next to ALGEBRA) allows you do just that, at a discount.

\*\**Tamara* performed to sold-out houses from 1980 to 1991 at the American Legion Hall on Highland in Hollywood. Audiences "followed" different characters throughout the facility, taking a break for dinner halfway through. It was once calculated that with the number of characters, storylines, and stages in *Tamara*, there were 479,001,600 ways to see the play.

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### Theater Review

## King commands attention



Robert Mandan and Lawrence Pressman in King Lear

by Mary Mallory

Tier 4 Company and Atlantic Overtures' production of Shakespeare's *King Lear* is a riveting and mesmerizing update with wonderful performances. Set in a corrupt business environment of shifting alliances and evil machinations, the classic hits home in today's corporate-dominated world.

The story revolves around the strong, demanding patriarch and his complicated relationship with his three daughters. One gives him unconditional love and support while the other two connive and plot against him. At the same time, uneasy alliances form to steal the kingdom/corporation and gain power. As tragedy befalls him, Lear shows true character and emotional strength.

Director Patsy Rodenburg's taut, lean production focuses on the understated performances of the actors to bring the icy betrayals alive. The entire cast is outstanding in how they coolly, effortlessly define their characters. Robert Mandan gives a majestic performance as the imperious King Lear, filled with authority, humility, and intelligence. He also beautifully brings Shakespeare's words alive. Jayne Brook oozes guile and insincerity as the plotting Goneril. Mili Avital evokes delicate vulnerability as the sensitive Cordelia. Timothy V. Murphy brings a fierce, steadfast honesty to the ever-loyal Kent. The accents range from American to British to Irish.

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### Theater Review

## *Thoughts* has much to say



Tony Tanner's play Second Thoughts

by Kyle Moore

For anyone who has ever been bemused and bewildered to find themselves on the AARP's mailing list, *Second Thoughts* is a sweet, sentimental, and sometimes sarcastic look at life from a silver-haired point of view. Writer Tony Tanner, at 74, still has plenty to say, and in his new musical *Second Thoughts*, he pours his unflagging wit and wry observations into a prolific 25 songs and sketches.

His cohorts for the evening are Angela DeCicco, a frenetic and funny diva, Lloyd Pederson, the droll straight man to some of Tanner's best gags, Bobbi Stamm, saucy and well turned-out, and finally Tanner himself, the sly ringmaster to this

4-ring mini-circus. Although some of the sketches seem a bit undercooked, it's no matter — they serve as tasty filler to the musical numbers, and Tanner's irrepressible wit crackles throughout. Under-scored simply and effectively with piano (David Kole) and violin (Vera Budinoff), Tanner's Not-Ready-For-the-Pasture Players take on aging, kids, grandkids, love (of all stripes), sex, exercise, and various and sundry permutations thereof.

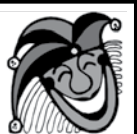
The fact that the evening contains not a whit of morose contemplation of one's mortality is a clear indication that Tanner has no intention of slowing down. As his cast sings in "You Go On," the show's closer, "there is still so much left to prove."

### Second Thoughts: The Musical Review

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Television

# Whistler a guilty pleasure

by M.Y. Lee

Who is the real Beck MacKaye (David Paetkau)? He's the reason why the N's new series, *Whistler*, is so damn fascinating. The show is about the Olympic snowboarding champion's mysterious death and the legacy of even more mysterious secrets he's left behind. It's reminiscent of the failed WB show, *The Mountain*, only it does what they couldn't... merge the melodrama of *Melrose Place* with the tension of the first season of *Desperate Housewives* (oh, and also *Whistler* has already a second season pick-up).

*Whistler*, now more than half way through its first season, is a guilty pleasure full of beautiful white people sleeping together, and wanting to sleep together. Jesse Moss plays Quinn MacKaye, Beck's baby brother who's convinced of the improbability that his pro snowboarding sibling could die in an accident. MacKaye desperately searches for the truth and gets hurled into Beck's dark underworld of sex, partying, and money. He unravels secrets that every good soap should have — blackmail, adultery, and criminal cover-ups.



David Paetkau as Beck MacKaye

The drama part of the show (frankly a little weak) contains storylines of Beck's family and friends and how they deal with the tragic death of their local hero. Beck's father, Ethan MacKaye (Nick Lea from *The X-Files*), once a promising snowboarding champion himself until a cliché knee injury rips apart his dreams, has difficulty moving on. Ethan ignores his younger son, Quinn, and leaves his wife, Jen (Ingrid Kavalars), to manage Beck's estate alone. Beck's erstwhile sponsor money seems to have disappeared into thin air; consequently, the family — supported solely by a struggling pub — continues to suffer financial hardships.

On the opposite end of the spectrum is the extremely wealthy and attractive Varland family that owns a hugely popular, successful hotel and resort headed by the always-scheming Adrien Varland (Christopher Shyer) who capitalizes off of the recently deceased Beck. Of course, this creates major drama between the Varlands and the MacKays. The best friend of Beck, Adrien's spoiled

rich kid son A.J. Varland (Brendan Penny), has now become a raging alcoholic. Carrie Miller (Amanda Crew) is Beck's ex-girlfriend, the only one who sympathizes with him. Running the hotel is Ethan MacKaye's brother, Ryan (Adam Harrington —almost a spitting image of another Ryan we see on a FOX reality show) who usually comes across as shady even when he plays it straight.

The storylines in *Whistler* are nothing groundbreaking, but they provide exactly what one might want in a prototypical melodrama. Beck sometimes comes back from the dead and talks to some of the living characters. Although trendy, the device works because the writers don't run it into the ground. The acting is definitely not Emmy-award winning, but then again: it's a soap, so what do you expect? What definitely works on this show is that adorable Canadian ablaunt that's often obscured until someone inevitably says "aboot" or "hoose." This is actually appropriate since the show takes place in British Columbia.

A positive and a negative for *Whistler* is that it's on the N. The only time one might come across this show is while watching reruns of *Dawson's Creek* or *My So-Called Life* (which is how I came to hear of it). Although the network broadcasts racy, edgy original programming like *DeGrassi* and *South of Nowhere*, most teenagers and young adults seem to be faithful to their WB — I mean CW — and FOX teenybopper dramas. On the flipside, ratings are low expectations and the show can risk storylines that the primetime networks would not allow.

Steamy sex scenes, various love triangles, and mysterious plot twists will keep a sufficient audience engaged in *Whistler*. As long as the show's writers can continue to use all of these devices properly, the show should be fine. The only concern is what do they do after Beck's murder is solved? He is the most fascinating character in the show, even though he's dead. By then, let's hope the writers will have gotten us attached to the other characters and find a way to develop another fascinating mystery. ☞

Television

# Cowell, Philbin team on Talent

by Frank Barron

Everything old is new again! For a generation who never saw *Ed Sullivan* or *The Gong Show*, the surprise hit of the summer is *America's Got Talent* (Wed. at 8 PM), which has been picked up by NBC for another outing mid-season. Obviously it was a great idea for the struggling Peacock Network to go into business with **Simon Cowell** and FremantleMedia, producers of the phenomenally successful *American Idol*. Even host **Regis Philbin** couldn't annoy viewers enough to keep them from tuning in the colorful array of singers, dancers, comics and unique acts. Hopefuls who could be headlining Vegas showrooms, and others better suited for carnival sideshows, strut their stuff in front of the celebrity judges, **Brandy** (*Moesha*) and **David Hasselhoff** (*Baywatch*), with grumpy-Brit **Piers Morgan** filling Cowell's role in *Idol*. Brandy is happy that families are watching together and reveals, "My four-year-old daughter is the biggest fan of the show. It's a great talent show for all ages. I love seeing the diversity of the performers, and I appreciate the courage some of them have to come on stage and do what they think they're good at."



Photos by True Patton

*A talented contestant? America's Got Talent features celebrity judge David Hasselhoff (top), R&B artist judge Brandy (middle), and host Regis Philbin shown with producer Simon Cowell (bottom)*

Sibling rivalry is the theme of Showtime's riveting dramatic series *Brotherhood*, with the eternal struggle of good and evil at its core. Focusing on two Irish brothers, one a criminal, the other a politician, the 11-episode story is unfolding with the crooks making the rules in a blue-collar New England neighborhood. By crooks I mean politicians in Providence, Rhode Island. Playing the sons of an indomitable Irish matriarch are **Jason Clarke** as the politician, and **Jason Isaacs** as the gangster. Veteran actress **Fionnula Flanagan** is the steely mom who taught both her sons to put "family first."



Jason Isaacs stars in Brotherhood

*Brotherhood* actually filmed in Providence, where Isaacs says he was occasionally recognized as the sinister Lucius Malfoy by *Harry Potter* movie fans, "but only when I walked around with a velvet cape, walking cane and, of course, a small blue elf." The talented British actor has a long list of menacing roles to his credit, including the iconic Captain Hook in the much-lauded 2003 film *Peter Pan*. Yet he's really nothing like his on-screen

persona. "I have two young daughters who think it's funny that daddy plays bad guys — because they love their daddy. Being Lucius Malfoy is great fun and makes me super cool with kids. It's a pleasure for me to give an autograph or sign a picture," he explains. But the extraordinary experience may be coming to an end for Isaacs, due to the plot line for the upcoming *Harry Potter* stories. In *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, which is the fifth movie scheduled for release in 2007, Isaacs is set to return as Lucius Malfoy. But he reveals "for book six, I'm definitely not working because I'm in prison all the way through. So I'm hoping for a big prison breakout in book seven."

He's encouraging Potter fans to write in and demand the return of Lucius. "For god's sake, I've got my fingers crossed for anyone who's a fan of mine to please write and get him out of prison for book seven. Because right now, I don't know whether I'm going to get to be in the next film, and I do love the role." ☞



## Q & A with an ad executive



Hollywood Insider with  
Dawn Miller

Emily Johnson works in the advertising industry as an Account Manager for Comcast Spotlight, with clients including Casino Morongo, Ashley Furniture and Giant RV.

### Please describe your typical day.

I never have a typical day. The one thing that is consistent is Starbucks in the morning.

### What do you think would surprise people to know about the advertising industry?

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### What made you go into advertising?

I was working as a temp for a Publishing House in the U.K. and they approached me to sell advertising. I had no idea at first what it entailed but I haven't done anything else since.

### What are the pros and cons?

The pros are that its fast paced, ever changing, and there is no such thing as a typical day. The cons are that it is very unpredictable and sometimes it feels that you are juggling too many things.

### What tips have you got for those looking to get into the business?

Persistence. It is hard work but being thick skinned and persistent is the key in my mind. Oh, and always retain your sense of humor.

### How do you feel about Time Warner's joint deal with Comcast to buy the assets of bankrupt cable provider Adelphia?

The merger is going to change the advertising environment drastically and afford so many opportunities. Time Warner will be responsible for 76% of the Los Angeles Market, which is incredible.



Emily Johnson

Have TV advertisers felt a pinch with the emergence of new technologies like TiVo?

Tivo and On Demand are still in a very small percentage of households. Also on the flip side, with all this new technology like VOD (Video on Demand)

there are so many new opportunities for advertisers, if they are prepared to think out of the box and utilize new mediums, it is to their advantage.

### How has Comcast dealt with the shift in advertising dollars toward the growing opportunities in online and mobile advertising?

Our annual budgets are still as aggressive as they always were and we are meeting the growth challenges. Of course we feel it at times, but we sell a relevant medium.

### Branded entertainment is a key part of a company's marketing strategy nowadays. How do you make the right decisions for where your clients place adverts?

Comcast embraces the consultative sale, so we spend a great deal of time trying to understand what our clients are trying to achieve and why. Our ideal is to ensure the right strategy even if that means we are not part of the mix. We have 44 networks that we place commercials on and so we can be very targeted not only by network but also by program.

### I'm sure you are involved in many promotional activities (events for clients). How much do you feel they help your client?

Enormously. I think that's one of our main selling points and something that needs to be utilized more and more, especially in the current environment. We are all savvy consumers so we are becoming harder and harder to reach, so a combination of everything is the only way to go. ☺

## FORD'S FUSION

### 'GROWN AND SEXY' EXPERIENCE PARTY TURNS UP HEAT FOR THE MICHAEL BAISDEN LIVE TOUR



Ford will be the exclusive automotive sponsor of the Michael Baisden Live 2006 tour by hosting its Ford Fusion 'Grown and Sexy' Experience Parties.



ABC Radio Networks' The Michael Baisden Show is the No. 1 urban radio program among adults ages 25-54 in Philadelphia, Washington, D.C. and Detroit. It is heard in 40 radio markets around the country, including eight of the top 10 markets.



DEARBORN, MICHIGAN—One of the hottest new cars—Ford Fusion—takes to the air with one of Urban radio's hottest nationally syndicated talk show hosts—Michael Baisden—by hosting 'Grown and Sexy' parties at 10 major stops on the Michael Baisden Live 2006 tour.

The Ford Fusion 'Grown and Sexy' Experience Party features live entertainment, dancing and an exclusive Michael Baisden appearance. Baisden will energize partygoers, as he hosts the party prior to his Michael Baisden Live 2006 show and popular relationship seminars in major cities such as Chicago, Dallas and Los Angeles. The party series will run throughout the summer and end in December 2006.

Every month, Michael Baisden will be giving away two Ford Fusion 'Grown and Sexy' Experience Party round-trip tickets for two individuals to travel to any Michael Baisden Live 2006 tour stop in the country. The trip includes a special VIP meet and greet with Baisden, first-class accommodations, entry to the 'Grown and Sexy' party and all weekend tour events plus \$200 in spending money.

"I couldn't be more excited to be associated with the new 2006 Fusion," said Baisden. "This relationship demonstrates Ford's commitment to reaching the African American community."

The parties draw on the themes established from Ford's 'Grown and Sexy' urban Web site and marketing campaign for the new Fusion mid-size sedan. The Fusion is a sedan targeted toward young, established professionals who feel grown and sexy and have a strong desire to express their personality and achievements.

The Michael Baisden Show is a daily, four-hour radio program combining music, interactive conversation and inspiration, with a heavy dose of self-help and empowerment. Heard in over 40 radio markets around the country, including eight of the top 10 markets, The Michael Baisden Show is the number one urban radio program among adults ages 25-54 in Philadelphia, Washington, D.C. and Detroit. Additionally, the

program is one of the highest-rated afternoon drive programs in New York City.

"Ford already has a strong relationship with The Michael Baisden Show through existing radio and online marketing campaigns," said Dan Geist, Fusion Marketing Manager. "Partnering with Michael Baisden to turn up the excitement on the Ford Fusion 'Grown and Sexy' Experience Party made perfect sense."

For details on obtaining tickets for the Ford Fusion 'Grown and Sexy' Experience Party, Fusion 'Grown and Sexy' Party Sweepstakes or the Michael Baisden Live 2006 tour visit [www.michaelbaisden.com](http://www.michaelbaisden.com), [www.grownandsexy.com](http://www.grownandsexy.com) or visit your local ABC Radio Networks affiliate Web site.

#### About Michael Baisden

Prior to launching his radio career, Baisden was a best-selling author whose self-published first book, *Never Satisfied: How and Why Men Cheat*, sold more than 300,000 copies. A subsequent publication, *Men Cry in the Dark*, is one of the most popular books ever among African American men and the stage adaptation featured notable actors such as Richard Roundtree (*Shaft*), Allen Payne (*New Jack City*), and Rhona Bennett (*The Jamie Foxx Show*). Baisden's third book, *The Maintenance Man*, was adapted into a stage play starring Billy Dee Williams. His latest novel, *God's Gift to Women*, was also a best-seller.

#### About Ford Fusion

The 2006 Ford Fusion breathes a fresh attitude into the American mid-size car. It distinguishes itself in what is one of the most competitive vehicle segments with its standout exterior design and engaging driving dynamics. With a bold design and more chrome accents than any vehicle in its class, Fusion brings style to the midsize sedan. Fusion supplies a rush of more than 220 horses from Fusion's available V6 with 6-speed automatic transmission. Fusion has a starting price of \$17,795.

## Greatest Show showing age, "Great Outdoors" fighting cancer



Hollywood Beat with  
Marci Weiner

The Greatest Show on Earth? Hardly! Where were the three rings? Where were the lions and tigers? What about the high-flying trapeze artists? Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey obviously has given in to PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) and other animal rights organizations and have "tamed" down their show. There is one token elephant who struts around the rim of the arena, and a huge photo image of a remote pachyderm family who might just

as well have been in Africa. Now Ringling Brothers' main attraction is a team of hat juggling acrobats, sort of like a tacky vaudeville show — outdated and outclassed by the Cirque de'Soleil. Their secondary attraction is Ringmaster Jennifer Fuentes, former finalist on *American Idol*. While she sure is a beauty, her vocal talents are better served on the small screen.

A more entertaining evening was spent at Concern Foundations 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Block Party at Paramount Studios. Entitled the "Great Outdoors Adventure," this event featured a silent auction, rock climbing, casino gaming, and live musical entertain-

ment. Dozens of restaurants set up food booths, and more than 3,000 participants chowed down on everything from pizzas to paella. Adam Corolla left his newborn twin boys at home to host the event's live auction. He fell in love with a nine-month-old lab that was up for bidding, and later joined Kristy Swanson (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*) for a sip of wine from Lohr vineyards. Swanson, who was with her new beau, later "skated" over to La Mill for a cup of coffee, where the two love birds were caught smooching the night away.

The best news is that over one million dollars was raised that evening to help fight cancer. Kudos

to humanitarians Jim and Lauren Freedman and *Los Angeles Magazine* for sponsoring this fantastic event.

Doris Roberts is among the celebrity participants scheduled to attend a "Texas Holdem" poker tournament on August 19<sup>th</sup> at the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel. This event benefits the Caucus for TV producers, writers and directors foundation, and provides grants for student filmmakers. Chaired by Chuck Fries and Lee Miller, this evening is open to the public at \$150 per person, and includes a start-up package of chips, wine bar, and dinner. Other celebs slated to participate include Ed Asner, Pamela Bach,

Charles Durning, John O'Hurley (love that guy from *Dancing with the Stars*) Eva La Rue, and James Woods. For ticket info please call 818-888-6182. Hope to see you there on the Hollywood Beat. ☺



Kristy Swanson

**Concert Review**

# Vans Warped Tour at Pomona Fairgrounds

by Revn Kevin of Rock City News

The 11th Annual installment of the VANS Warped Tour hit the Pomona Fairgrounds like an inferno with 11 Stages, Skateboard Demos, and a Vendor area that resembled a small swap meet. The brainchild of Kevin Lyman, the Warped Tour grows each year and yet still retains its small town carnival atmosphere. This is partly due to the fact that the fans, who stream in from the far reaches of SoCal, can get up close and personal with a ton of their favorite groups.

It's great that so many acts get together, but with 11 Stages, a huge logistical problem arises: who do you want to see the most? As I wandered the complex, I was able to catch sets on the main stages by headliners Joan Jett and the Blackhearts, NOFX, Less Than Jake, and Anti-Flag. I cruised some of the smaller stages and checked out sets by first time Tour punks Eight Fingers Down and rockers Otto's Daughter, fronted by hottie Jacqueline.

A very important side story to the VANS Tour this year is how the promoters and organizers have made tremendous ecological strides. Transportation for a huge chunk of the Tour is provided by a fleet of 14 buses, 11 trucks, and three generators that all run on bio-diesel fuel that reduces pollutants by up to 20%. Feeding the hordes of people on the Tour is Tada Catering who uses non-plastic utensils, thus preventing thousands of pounds of waste going to the dump. AOL provides biodegradable drinking cups, the Hot Topic Stage runs on a solar-powered system up to nine hours a day using totally pollution-free power, and each stop on the Tour has hundreds of fans and volunteers picking up literally tons of recyclables. I personally witnessed this in action.

With all this environmental effort in action this Tour saves the Earth's precious resources like no other Tour can boast. For more information visit [www.warpedtour.com](http://www.warpedtour.com) and to see the photos in huge color come visit me at [www.revnkevin.com](http://www.revnkevin.com). ☞

**Concert Review**

# Redd Kross at Redcat Theater downtown L.A.

by Dustin Lane of Rock City News

According to Steven McDonald, it has been nine years since older brother Jeff has been on stage. There were no signs of rust as Redd Kross took to the stage for this year's Don't Knock the Rock Festival. Reuniting with band mates Robert Hecker and Roy McDonald (from the "Neurotica" and "Third Eye" albums), the Kross rocked as though they had never been gone. From the opening chords of "Lady in the Front Row," the 250 people lucky enough to score tickets could tell that this was going to be a night to remember. Hearing songs from "Phaseshifter" ("Crazy World," "Jimmy's Fantasy," "Huge Wonder," and "After School Special") took me back to the early 90's and to a time when "indie rock" was good. Songs from "Show World" ("Mess

Around," "Girl God," and "Follow the Leader") and Neurotica (Frosted Flake, What They Say, and Robert Hecker's wonderful "Love Is You") had everyone out of their seats, as they danced and sung along to every chorus. They even broke out "Bubblegum Factory" from 1990's Third Eye. It was basically a greatest hits set that could easily have been twice as long. To close out the night, Steven brought out his wife, Anna Waronker, and launched in to "Your Bed," a song by Redd Kross side project Ze Malibu Kids. I have not been this happy after a concert in years. And with a new Redd Kross album coming out some time this year, we can all benefit from having one of the best bands to have ever come out of Los Angeles back at the top of its game.

Redd Kross will also be playing at Sunset Junction on August 26. ☞

**Column**

# Music legend going solo



Words n Music with  
**Kat Kramer**

**Kat:** I especially love "Hurricane" — the single, and the ballad "Heal The Rage." What was the inspiration behind it?

**Blondie:** Thank you, "Heal The Rage" is one of my favorites. It's special because my daughter Noelle sings on it and it's great to work with her. I'm writing some songs for her to record on her own because she's good. She also writes lyrics, whatever is natural for her, I encourage. She was the main inspiration.

**Kat:** How did you choose the musicians?

**Blondie:** Well, there aren't many on the album. Just Keith Lentin — who produced it with me, he also played bass, and Anton Fig from The David Letterman Band played drums. I did all the music...I wrote the songs with Keith (Lentin) in my bedroom. Steve Barber did the lovely string arrangements. I wanted it to be economical. It's not the biggest production. There were no outside guests or editions.

**Kat:** On The Stones tour, are you circulating the CD to local European radio stations?

**Blondie:** It's just starting to happen. When I get to Amsterdam — that will be the big push. I'm playing a gig at a Rolling Stones' club called Paradiso. [Stones backup vocalist] Bernard Fowler is appearing along with me. It's a jam session, but I'm hoping to play some tunes from "Between Us." It just hit the States, and I will be doing some live gigs in L.A. to promote the CD — maybe before Christmas, but definitely in Spring 2007. I'll keep you posted. I'm really looking forward to it.

**Kat:** How long did it take you to record the entire album? Was it a long process?

**Blondie:** I recorded it when I had time — over a 2-year period. It was a nice way to work. We'd start out at 10 AM and finish around 6:30 or 7 PM. I needed that discipline, it was like a 9 to 5 job. It took all day on some of the tracks — you just keep doing it, you keep playing.

On November 18, Chaplin and The Rolling Stones will give plenty of "satisfaction" when they rock Dodger Stadium in L.A. as one of their final North American stops on The Bigger Bang World Tour! [www.RollingStones.co](http://www.RollingStones.co). Or, check out his new website. [www.BlondieChaplin.com](http://www.BlondieChaplin.com)

Live Your Dreams...  
Kat ☞

Well folks, what do The Rolling Stones, The Band, The Beach Boys, The Byrds, Eric Clapton, and Bonnie Raitt have in common? **Blondie Chaplin**. This genius singer/songwriter and South African native has been in demand with the top musicians in the music business since the mid-60's. If you've ever listened to the beautiful lead vocal on The Beach Boys' "Sail On Sailor" — you've heard the soaring voice of Blondie Chaplin and you probably didn't even know it. Now, Chaplin has decided to spend some time in the spotlight with his new CD "Between Us," recently released on Big Karma Records.

Blondie Chaplin has put together a wonderful group of songs on his third solo album. "Hurricane" is the first single, and is extremely catchy with an optimistic sound and beat. One of the truly beautiful melodic tracks is "Mother Smother," which was written as a loving tribute to the late Rick Danko (The Band), who was a friend and collaborator of Chaplin's.

Other lovely songs include "Love Is The Power" and "Crawl." "So Hard" is a country-esque ballad, and "Love You Till I Die" is an uptempo, reggae-style ditty. My personal favorite is the haunting "Heal The Rage," a tribute to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. It's a song with a melody you just can't stop humming, and it features a slow, lilting beat and sweeping string sounds.

Chaplin is currently touring Europe with the world's greatest rock n' roll band — The Rolling Stones — as one of their back-up singers/musicians. But he still found time to chat with me all the way from Berlin, Germany.

**Kat Kramer:** How's the Europe tour going? I wish I was there. Can't wait till you guys come back!

**Blondie Chaplin:** Extremely well. It's very hot! But beautiful. I took a train ride from Munich to Berlin, it was glorious. But the weather is unusually warm.

**Kat:** I love the new CD, what made you decide to take a more personal approach?

**Blondie:** I wanted to do that — it's completely honest, and it's a side of me I wanted to explore. ...It's about relationships, Africa — very personal. I covered a lot of ground.

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- **FRIDAY AUGUST 4** •  
9:30pm - Lovely  
10:30pm - Blue Soul  
11:30 - Amit Apte Experience
- **SATURDAY, AUGUST 5** •  
9:30pm - Chris Parish  
10:30pm - Theresa's Birthday bash w/
- **SUNDAY AUGUST 6** •  
9:30pm - Tkia Colton  
10:30pm - Swaying Buildings
- **MONDAY AUGUST 7** •  
10:30pm - Starr Cullars  
11:30pm - Maria Cue
- **TUESDAY AUGUST 8** •  
8:30pm Sleepless Me  
9:30pm Resident Hero  
10:30pm Barcelona  
11:30pm Deccatree
- **THURSDAY AUGUST 10** •  
8:00pm - Levi Chen  
9:30pm - Slips into Space  
10:30pm - The Seasons  
11:30pm - The Serpents
- **FRIDAY AUGUST 11** •  
8:30pm - Winston & The Telescreen  
10:30pm - Last American Buffalo  
11:30pm - Mike Lichens

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Abstract Rude  
Deep Rooted  
Parts Unknown
- TUESDAY - AUGUST 8  
Moonlight Towers  
Shattered Atom and Great  
Girls Blouse
- WEDNESDAY - AUGUST 9  
Rachel McGoye  
Surburban Plight and Ryan  
Bisio
- THURSDAY - AUGUST 10  
Sick Puppies  
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Devastating Karate and Quick  
Six

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MOZELLA  
HOLLY BROOK
- Monday August 7  
JACKnDANIELLE
- Tuesday August 8  
DISCOVER ZONE  
CORY BENJAMIN  
GROOVE BAZAAR  
KING SIZED OPERATOR  
MOJO
- Wednesday August 9  
400 BLOWS  
BRIGHT LIGHT FEVER
- Thursday August 10  
VERONICA TORRES  
LIMELIGHT  
RENT TO OWN  
COLD FUSION  
CANDACE DEVINE  
SUBURBAN PLIGHT  
THE ROYAL FEVER  
THE DAYS INBETWEEN



Concert Review

# CSYN: free world

Live at the Verizon Amphitheater


by Sean Reynolds

Last Sunday the heat wave that had held much of the West Coast hostage was finally showing signs of relenting. An ocean breeze rolled over the olive and amber hills while early stars glittered softly through the sunset clouds over Irvine when the four lifetime friends raised their guitars to open the show with a song from Neil Young's controversial new CD, "Living with War." "Flags of Freedom" is a ballad written for the young men who are "going off to war" and their families that are wishing them farewell. "Listenin' to Bob Dylan in 1963 watching the flags of freedom flying," the words are purposefully reminiscent of Dylan's "Chimes of Freedom Flashing." Gigantic flags alternated between America's Stars and Stripes and Canada's Maple Leaf before a huge peace symbol covered the back of the stage.

David Crosby, Graham Nash, and Stephen Stills—reunited with their long-time Buffalo Springfield friend—fused their voices in rich harmony on four more familiar selections including "Wooden Ships" and "Carry On" before supporting Neil on five songs from his anti-war release. A large "We The People" lay across the floor of the stage like an enormous Declaration of Independence as Neil tore into his old black Les Paul during "The Restless Consumer" in which he contorts his face, deeply pleading "don't need no more lies." Before the intermission the band would knock-out fourteen songs. Crosby sang his melancholy "Almost Cut My Hair" and Nash resurrected an old Vietnam protest tune, "Military Madness." The four blended soft even tones on "Déjà Vu" as Young sang again to salute the men and women serving over-seas.

Rick Rosas on bass guitar, Spooner Oldham on keyboards, and Ben Keith on pedal steel are familiar friends of Neil Young. They are a few of the performers who join with him in place of Talbot, Molina, and Sampedro of Crazy Horse and they were as sharp as ever Sunday night. Young is a fortunate artist surrounded by incredible talent. The show slowly gained momentum after the break. CSN harmonized on a favorite old tune, "Our House" and Young charmed his fans with a piano solo of "Only Love Can Break Your Heart." With searchlights circling over the swollen crowd, Young stomped his familiar Indian step as he cranked up the sound with "Old Black," backing Stills on "Tree-top Flyer," a tribute to low-flying drug smugglers. Stills, his voice straining with an ancient blues luster, belted out "Southern Cross" and the crowd was on their feet. As Tommy Bray blew taps amidst a cloud of simulated battle smoke, Young launched into his most controversial song on the new CD, "Let's Impeach the President."

The aging rock icons, infamous for their anti-war ballads, returned the patrons to their seats with an a cappella "Find The Cost of Freedom" and a soulful interpretation of "For What It's Worth." The show climbed back to fever rhythm with the inflammatory "Ohio" and they sent the crowd home screaming with one of Young's most popular and recognizable hits, "Keep On Rockin' in the Free World."

The show was surprisingly free of rhetoric. The musicians opted to use their instruments and lyrics to convey their message of hope and unity. The harmonies were clear and haunting. The guitars were crisp and sweet. And Good Old Neil with his Fender Deluxe and trusted Les Paul seemed ready to save the world on his own. 

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SATURDAY AUGUST 5



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SUNDAY AUGUST 6  
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CD RELEASE PARTY  
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WEDNESDAY AUGUST 9



**LIQUID SOUL**  
SIMONE TAYLOR

SATURDAY AUGUST 12



**LIQUITS**  
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MONDAY AUGUST 14



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THIS WEEK: ALL SHOWS ALL AGES UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

TONIGHT!!! THURSDAY AUGUST 3 - 8PM - TWILIGHT OF THE GODS...  
**X-Ray OK / The Janks / Jettson / Costa Nova / Moan Red**

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**The Weapon They Fear / Epherus / Ounce of Self / Exmortus / Diavlo / Dyer**

FRIDAY AUGUST 4 - 8PM - SEAN HEALY PRESENTS...  
**By All Means / Afterward / Red Lights Out / Fringe**

EVERY SUNDAY NIGHT - 10PM - 18+ - EVIL CLUB EMPIRE PRESENTS...  
**Blacklist (formerly Dungeon)**

MONDAY AUGUST 7 - 7PM - M PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS...  
**Turning Robots Into People / I Got Shot In The Face / Too Close For An Enemy**

MONDAY AUGUST 7 - 8PM - CHURCH OF THE 8TH DAY PRESENTS...  
**Red Tape / Playing Enemy / Thriller / Dangers / Ruin The Ending / Carry the Casket / Take Hold / Lionheart**

UPCOMING SHOWS:

FRIDAY AUGUST 11 - 8PM  
**Helen Stellar / Gliss / Shiloe / Occidental**

SATURDAY AUGUST 11 - 730PM - EARLY SHOW...  
**Student Film / London Broil**

SATURDAY AUGUST 11 - 10PM - LATE SHOW - 21+  
**Nightlife featuring the world famous Beat Junkies**

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 16 - 730PM  
**The Hanks / Likewise**

THURSDAY AUGUST 17 - 8PM  
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SATURDAY AUGUST 19 - 730PM - LOCAL PACIFIC & TIN PANDA PRESENTS...  
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WEDNESDAY AUGUST 9



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SECRET SECRET / LO:LITA

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**TRAVIS SULLIVAN'S BJORKESTRA**  
ROBERT TOM / MAY POLE / DETROIT MUTANT RADIO

TUESDAY AUGUST 15



**R.A. THE RUGGED MAN**  
PIRATE SYGNAL

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 16  
WAGATAIL PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS...  
**REHAB**

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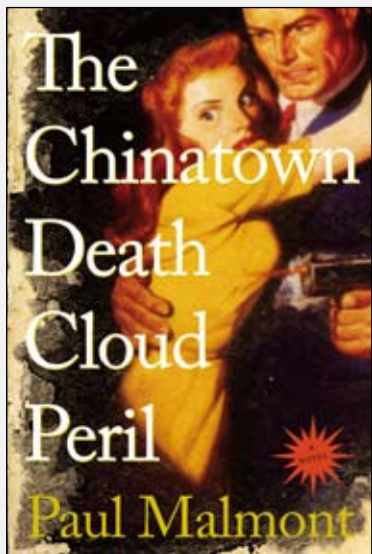
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- 8.4 INTERNATIONAL POP OVERTHROW 2006:  
Madman Moon, The Faded, The Letter Openers, The Craze, Mama Got Five, Fairweather Friend, Route7, The Plus Side
- 8.5 Cities (Yep Roc), Cataract Camp, Pop Levi
- 8.6 EARLY SHOW: 6PM  
The Break Up, OK Stranger, Bel Air Academy, Family Tree
- 8.8 EARLY SHOW: 630PM - Ronnie Day, Curt Phillips  
LATE SHOW: BLUEBEAT LOUNGE - EVERY TUESDAY!  
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# A feel of real pulp

by Sean Reynolds

With his debut novel, Paul Malmont revisits the brief pre-war era of pulp magazines. His inspired utilization of pulp conventions — the morbid fascination with the nostalgic edge-of-your-seat thrillers of yesteryear — presents bizarre tales culled from the extraordinary lives of two well-known writers of the genre, Walter Gibson and Lester Dent. *The Chinatown Death Cloud Peril* has all the components that would satisfy the demands of a Hollywood blockbuster: enervating foot chases through crowded city streets, ghoulish slime-laden creatures, screaming midnight trains, and dangerous sea passages. Known by his *nom de plum* Maxwell Grant, Gibson was the genius behind the notorious Street and Smith character *The Shadow* (best known today as Alec Baldwin in the late 1990's feature adaptation). Lester Dent, aka Kenneth Robeson, contributed *Doc Savage* to a prototypical five-cents-a-word Depression Era publisher.



The novel begins with Gibson sitting at the White Horse Tavern in Greenwich Village asking, "You think life can't be like the pulps? Let me tell you a story." As he slowly unravels his yarn, Gibson nervously practices a sleight-of-hand — his Chesterfield cigarette magically materializes then disappears out of his fingers. The cigarette tip glows as he spins the *Tale of the Sweet Flower War*, involuntarily typing his words onto the table before him while he speaks. The narrative is rife with dime-store blood and passion, pulp fiction paranoia, and newsstand villains.

Loaded with scotch and ink, Dent and Gibson are dispatched from the New York bar to dual spectacular journeys that will ineluctably interweave and eventually reunite them on an adventure that could very well outdo many of the noir stories they've published respectively.

Although the story grows a bit wearisome at times, Malmont uses the enormous egos of Gibson and Dent, the dark and crowded streets of New York, and the exotic backdrop of Chinatown in conjunction with a coterie of prominent personalities of the era — Louis L'Amour, Orson Welles, Harry Houdini, and L. Ron Hubbard, to name a few — as he constructs an all-encompassing experience of dangerous intrigue.

Malmont recalls that he found a copy of a Bantam reprint of *Doc Savage* at a book sale when he was ten-years-old. His father came to share his enthusiasm for pulp fiction.




Author Paul Malmont

"To support my addiction," Malmont went on to say, "he gave me copies of *The Shadow* radio broadcast featuring Orson Welles who would ask the famous question, 'Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men?' I'm not a serious collector of the genre, but I love the style, and it finally came together in my head to write about it."

Another phantom writer haunting the chapters of *The Chinatown Death Cloud Peril* is H. P. Lovecraft. An obscure newsstand contributor in the 1930's, he failed to reach the top tier. Nevertheless, he's today lionized as an icon for artists and writers who are enamored with the macabre and bizarre.

"I set out to write a book that is fun and entertaining," says the author. "You know, filled with death clouds and cowboys and stuff. Gibson and Dent were the Spielberg and Lucas of their generation, and Hubbard is just fascinating for what he did. He transgressed the genre of pulp and established the Church of Scientology."

The question remains. Is it real or is it pulp? 



Left: Gibson in 1995's *Braveheart*  
Above: Gibson in his mug shot was not quite Tom Delay, but still pretty chipper

## Up in flames?

Public defender examines the case against Gibson

by Jonathan W. Hickman

This week it has been impossible to escape news of Mel Gibson's arrest for allegedly driving under the influence. TMZ.com managed to procure a copy of what is said to be the police officer's incident report. After reading the four-page narrative from TMZ, the news for Mr. Gibson (both legally and in the public eye) isn't good. With the dramatic public outrage over Gibson's alleged tirade, the criminal punishment involved may be the least of his worries. But, because my day job is that of the Public Defender in a misdemeanor court, *Entertainment Today* asked me to analyze the purported facts and give my analysis of the case against Gibson from a legal standpoint.

Gibson has been formally charged with two separate counts of DUI. But under California Law, he can only be sentenced on one of them. One charge is a general DUI, the other is driving over the legal limit. The prosecutor charged both to cover its bases. News reports state that Mr. Gibson was initially stopped for speeding. From a trial perspective, it is important to understand that speeding is not normally an offense associated with a person under the influence. More often than not, someone suspected of drinking while driving is pulled over for failure to maintain in his/her lane of traffic (referred to as "weaving"). Therefore, should Mr. Gibson's attorneys decide to go to trial, they will no doubt point out that he sufficiently controlled his vehicle, whatever the rate of speed.

The incident report indicates that once Mr. Gibson was stopped, he was given a field sobriety test. The


report asserts that the result of the preliminary test was a reading of .12 percent of blood alcohol concentration. In California, the vehicle code section 23152(b) mandates it a misdemeanor (crime usually punishable by incarceration of 12 months or less) to drive with a blood alcohol concentration of .08 percent or more. Defense attorneys can attack the test as apocryphal, as one may claim that it was processed improperly or that the readout was not accurate. A host of experts could be employed to debate the science behind breath testing. More than one defendant has made successful use of such expert testimony at trial.

Missing from the narrative portion of the report available on TMZ is any reference to any other field sobriety testing. But other portions of the report may contain this information. There are a number of field sobriety tests that law enforcement uses to build their case against a defendant. These tests are often performed in front of the officer's patrol car and captured on videotape. The truth is that none is particularly scientific. Each test is greatly dependent on the environmental conditions present, the instructions given by the officer, the athletic prowess of the defendant, the age of the defendant, and the observation abilities of the officer. The officer looks for what are referred to as "clues" in order to prove what he already suspects — that the defendant is under the influence.

Therefore, without any other field sobriety test in the Gibson case, the strength of the charges will depend on the other observations by the officer. The lengthy narrative section of the alleged report reveals a number of

things that a prosecutor could use to enhance the chances of conviction. Statements made by the defendant could shine light on his state of mind and mental condition at the time of driving. Gibson's alleged statements have been front page news and could be used by a prosecutor to indicate that he was under the influence. One problematic part of the narrative report concerns questioning of Gibson by the officer regarding an open bottle of tequila supposedly found in Gibson's vehicle. From the hard-to-read incident report, it does not appear that such questioning was accompanied by Miranda warnings to Gibson. This could be an area where the defense counsel might plausibly seek to have any statements suppressed.

The bottle of liquor itself is critical evidence for the prosecution. Another potentially damaging portion of the report from a legal perspective is the allegation that Gibson attempted to escape. At trial, evidence of fleeing the scene of a crime could be argued as an indication of guilt. It does not appear that Gibson was charged with obstruction of an officer but that charge may be levied when the prosecutor gets the case.

A DUI case can be one of the most complex cases handled by a defense attorney or prosecutor. It is one of the only cases in which a conviction may depend on degree. This means one could drink and drive, but can only be found guilty if the concentration of alcohol makes that person less safe or is over the established legal limit. If no probation is given, first offenders face a minimum jail sentence of 96 hours, 48 of which must be served continuously. The maximum jail sentence is six months. One's driving license is suspended on the first conviction for six months. Most of my clients are terribly affected by the loss of license associated with a conviction for DUI. Should Mel Gibson be convicted of DUI, I seriously doubt that losing his license will adversely affect his mobility. 

Film Review

# Identity intrigue in *Listener*

THE NIGHT LISTENER

★★★★☆  
(3 out of 4 stars)

DIRECTED BY PATRICK STETTNER

STARRING: ROBIN WILLIAMS,  
TONI COLLETTE, RORY CULKIN

82 MINUTES, RATED R

by Kim Voynar



Photo by Anne Joyce / Courtesy of Miramax Films

Robin Williams as Gabriel in *The Night Listener*

How much do we really know about the people we allow into our lives? To what degree do we manipulate our views of relationships to meet our own needs? And how true are the stories we tell each other, and ourselves? *The Night Listener*, adapted from Armistead Maupin's novel by the same name, tackles those questions in this tale of a radio storyteller who develops a long-distance friendship with a 14-year-old boy.

Gabriel (Robin Williams), a middle-aged gay man, first learns of young Pete (Rory Culkin) from an editor who plans to publish the boy's memoir—a tragic tale of sexual and physical abuse at the hands of his parents. His adoptive mother, Donna (Toni Collette), says he wrote the memoir as a way of dealing with what happened to him, and it is remarkably mature piece of work for a 14-year-old boy to have written. After Gabriel reads the book, he forms a fatherly relationship of sorts with the boy over the phone and through letters. Pete is sick with AIDS and is getting sicker, and Gabriel, lost and flailing in aftermath of a 10-year relationship, latches onto the boy with unbridled fervor. Gabriel's ex-lover, Jess (Bobby Cannavale), is also afflicted with AIDS. Gabriel had patiently nursed Jess back to health while using their relationship as inspiration for his writing. But thanks to a new drug regimen, Jess is no longer living under the shadow of an eminent demise. He has ended the relationship in search of space and freedom, leaving Gabriel not only without a lover, but also without material for his stories.

It's Jess who first notices something odd: upon hearing both Pete and Donna speak over the phone, he points out that the two voices sound oddly similar. Gabriel is angered and threatened by Jess' suggestion that Pete might not be who he thinks he is. As the seeds of doubt begin to take root, Gabriel decides to investigate and learns that no one has ever actually met Pete in person, so he goes on a quest to uncover the truth.

*The Night Listener*, which Maupin has called a "thriller of the heart," is based on real-life events from Maupin's life. In 1992, Maupin was

sent a manuscript by a 14-year-old boy—a tale of abuse that he claimed had really happened. As in the film, Maupin befriended the boy and his adoptive mother through a long-distance phone relationship. After his ex-partner detected the similarity between the boy's voice and that of his mother, Maupin began to question not only the boy and his story, but also his own need to believe in it.

Williams as Gabriel pulls out the serious persona he played to perfection in *Good Will Hunting*. I enjoy him in his serious roles, far more than in his off-the-wall, super-energetic comedian routine. And, his performance in *The Night Listener* is one of his best. We all weave stories that color our existence, but Gabriel, more than most people, needs them to survive and thrive. With Jess gone and his creative well dried up, Gabriel no longer knows who he is. In his relationship with Pete, Gabriel begins to find himself again—but is what he finds through Pete real even if Pete himself is not?

Collette, who tackles challenging roles with an uncanny ease, easily vacillates between a warm, nurturing mother and a potential nutcase. Is Donna really trying to protect this fragile, dying boy from the world—or pulling off an incredible fraud? Collette's Donna is just off-balance

enough that you can never be sure, and as the story line takes Gabriel to the small Wisconsin town where Donna and Pete reside, I started to wonder if things were going to take a truly bizarre turn ala Stephen King's *Misery*, which also brought together an off-center, mentally unbalanced woman with a writer with whom she was obsessed.

Rory Culkin isn't given a great deal to do in the role of Pete, but what he does, he does quite well. If he keeps taking interesting roles like this one, he'll end up with a career that far surpasses that of big brother Macaulay. Sandra Oh lights up the screen as Gabriel's friend and assistant, Anna. I would have liked to have seen her more, but her interplay with Williams is great when she's there. Cannavale puts in a solid, believable performance as Jess, who has cheated death and now wants to relearn what it means to live. Cannavale and Williams create a dynamic in their on-screen relationship that feels very real. The primary tension in the film, though, is between Williams and Collette, and they play their roles to a tee, thrusting and parrying around each other as Gabriel circles closer to unraveling the truth.

The settings and cinematography help set the tone of the film—snowy upstate New York substitutes for Wisconsin, and the desolation of the wintry setting creates an eerie atmosphere. Director Patrick Stettner does a fine job of adapting Maupin's work, creating a suspenseful, intelligent thriller that hooks viewers without beating them over the head. He puts the final thread in the hands of the audience, and leaves it to them to follow, along with Gabriel, the path it will wind along. *R*



Photo by Anne Joyce / Courtesy of Miramax Films

Toni Collette is frightening as Donna

Kim Voynar is Managing Editor and a film critic for *Cinematical.com*. She also writes for *eFilmCritic.com* and *HollywoodBitchslap.com*.

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# Voice of *Descent*

ET critics disagree on spelunking scarefest

Photo by Alex Bailey



By Peter Sobczynski

Having played virtually everywhere else in the world, the British horror film *The Descent* has finally arrived in America atop a wave of fanboy hype claiming it as a modern masterpiece and one of the most terrifying films ever made. Thanks to such advances as the Internet, this kind of pre-release hype has become more and more common in recent years in the world of independent genre filmmaking and sometimes the chatter winds up being fully justified—*Ginger Snaps*, *The Blair Witch Project*, and *May* immediately leap to mind—but too often, it turns out to be just a lot of hot air surrounding utterly ordinary crud like *Cabin Fever* or too many Japanese horror films to mention. While *The Descent* is nowhere near as bad as the latter examples, it too fails to live up to its advance billing and becomes just another exercise in silly gore and sillier plotting that will probably disappoint those expecting it to be the Next Big Horror Thing.

## THE DESCENT

DIRECTED BY NEIL MARSHALL  
STARRING: SHAUNA MACDONALD,  
NATALIE MENDOZA, ALEX REID,  
SASKIA MULDER, NORA-JANE NOONE,  
MYANNA BURNING

99 MINUTES, RATED R

★★★★☆  
(3 1/2 out of 4 stars)

★★☆☆☆  
(2 out of 4 stars)

After a prologue setting up the personal trauma of the main character—a thoroughly ugly and unnecessary bit that apes the opening of *Dead Calm* and could have easily been cut without much of a loss—*The*

*Descent* sets us down in the Appalachians to introduce our victims-to-be, a group of women (mostly British) on their yearly extreme-sports excursion.

This year, American daredevil Juno (Natalie Mendoza) has arranged for the exploration of an underground cave system for her pals—Sarah (Shauna Macdonald), whose trip the year before ended with that catastrophic prologue, Beth (Alex Reid), schoolteacher Rebecca (Saskia Mulder), med student Sam (MyAnna Buring), and hotshot newcomer Holly (Nora-Jane Noone whom you may recall as the feistiest of the victims in *The Magdalene Sisters*). All is fun and games for a while until a cave-in seals off their entrance and it turns out that instead of being the well-charted and patrolled cave system that Juno suggested, it is in fact a system that remains unexplored

and uncharted. Actually, they do discover evidence that others explorers were in there before—some century-old pieces of climbing equipment—but the fact that the cave remains unknown would seem to indicate that whomever left it behind didn't quite make it out themselves.

This stretch of the movie is easily the best section because of the way that writer/director Neil Marshall (whose previous work was the cult favorite *Dog Soldiers*) slowly and efficiently ratchets up the suspense by effectively playing on some of the most basic of human fears. No matter how brave of a face we may put on, all of us have a deep-seated terror of such things as being buried alive, being hopelessly lost in a location that no one would ever think to look, and suffering a leg break of Joe Theisman-like proportions. Marshall milks those elements with such cruel elegance that even the most jaded horror buffs, especially confirmed urbanites like myself who consider even a simple “nature walk” as high-octane nightmare fuel, are likely to respond to it—so much so that they may even find themselves willing to overlook Marshall's fondness for cheap “BOO” moments, dream sequences, flat dialogue (“It's the dark, it plays tricks on you”), and sketchily-developed characters.

At this point, however, our heroines discover that they are not alone in the cave and both the women and the film wind up quickly going straight to hell as it devolves into yet another story of people being picked off in the dark by an array of loathsome, flesh-eating creatures. The gold standard for this particular subgenre is still Ridley Scott's 1979 masterpiece *Alien* and it is clear that Marshall studied that film long and hard in preparation for *The Descent*—both films feature strong female leads, a long tension-building first half that quietly builds to a jaw-dropping moment of pure visceral terror, and a second half that consists of one jolt after another. The difference between the two is that Scott remembered to quietly build up the characters as well (so that their eventual demises would have some meaning). He also threw enough surprises into the mix even after the monster popped out of John Hurt so that viewers would never know what to expect next.

By comparison, Marshall, after shooting his wad with the big scare moment (which was sadly given away in the trailers), has nothing else

see *DESCENT* on p.14

by Warren Curry


Over the years, I've seen my fair share of horror movies, but I need to think way back to my pre-teen years to recall one that genuinely frightened me. *The Descent* is a relentlessly paced movie that could very possibly leave you bruised from all the squirming you're sure to do, and one of the most intense viewing experiences I've ever endured. British filmmaker Neil Marshall delivers a full on assault with his follow-up to 2002's cult favorite *Dog Soldiers*. Often, Marshall deprives you of even a moment to catch your breath. And the film remains consistently suspenseful and riveting in the third-act, when most horror movies grow tiresome.

Six thrill-seeking women convene in the Appalachian Mountains to explore a cave. Juno (Natalie Mendoza) is the group's leader, determined to protect the fragile emotional state of Sarah (Shauna Macdonald) who lost her husband and daughter in a grizzly car accident a year earlier. In good spirits, the women set off on their excursion, and descend into the cave with little problem. But when the tunnel collapses behind them, Juno reveals she brought the group to a different cave than they had discussed. This cave has not been mapped or documented at all, and it's not entirely clear—perhaps even doubtful—that anyone who has ventured into it has survived to tell the tale. When their understandable anger subsides, the group soldiers on to navigate the treacherous cave and find a way out. If the situation didn't look bleak enough, it turns out the cave they've chosen is inhabited by a mutant, subhuman species with a taste for human blood.

Like most horror movies, *The Descent* is thrust into motion by a severe error in judgment. But once the women process the dire situation, most of their subsequent decisions are plausible. Mendoza as Juno makes for a sexy and enjoyably authoritative leader. Her interaction with Macdonald's Sarah is pivotal as secrets rise to the surface, and Sarah becomes able to summon the confidence she's lacked since the loss of her family.

Although the women's encounters with their predators provide constant jolts, the film may have been better served to balance this with the natural dangers of the cave. There's no mistaking that the cave is a treacherous element, but a few more scenes showing the women grappling with the completely foreign terrain would have added to the film's sense of displacement and desperation.

*The Descent* takes a page or two from other horror/thrillers, most obviously *Aliens*. But Marshall also brings his own ideas to the table and isn't the least bit timid about pushing his audience to its collective breaking point. Those who have read anything about this movie are probably aware that the U.S. version contains a different ending than the British release. Judging from what I've heard of the original ending, they shouldn't have touched it...but this is a minor point.

*The Descent* deserves to be seen on the big screen in a packed theater—a rare experience that should be shared. Even the most cynical viewers will have their faith in the horror genre firmly restored. 

Reviews by Warren Curry also appear on Entertainment Insiders ([www.einsiders.com](http://www.einsiders.com)) and can be heard on the podcast Filmmakers Pod ([www.filmmakerspod.com](http://www.filmmakerspod.com)).



Feature photo: Juno (Natalie Mendoza) leads the way for Rebecca (Saskia Mulder) in *The Descent*  
Above: Juno plans an escape with Beth (Alex Reid) and Sarah (Shauna MacDonald)

Photo by Alex Bailey

# Anchorman rides again



Will Ferrell co-wrote *Talladega Nights* and *Anchorman* with writer/director Adam McKay

by Peter Sobczynski

The latest comedy from Will Ferrell, *Talladega Nights* is essentially *Anchorman* with its doofus hero seated behind the wheel of a racecar instead of a news desk. Everything else is pretty much the same — the premise, the approach, and even some of the jokes — except that the giddy ingenuity of that earlier film has been replaced with a lot of expensively produced scenes that are never quite as funny as the creators seem to think they are. This results in some genuinely hilarious moments surrounded by a lot of aimless noodling, and a film that, on the grand scale of Classic Comedy, falls somewhere between *Bewitched* and *Days of Thunder*.

Ferrell once again plays a self-absorbed dope who starts off at the top of a unique profession, loses everything because of the appearance of a challenger to his throne, and gains it all back in the end, along with the hand of a woman who is unquestionably too smart for him, without having really learned anything in the process. This time around, he is Ricky Bobby, a man who, as a child, took the lone bit of advice imparted on him by his wayward father (Gary Cole) — “If you aren’t first, you’re last” — and rode it to glory as the top driver on the NASCAR circuit. He has it all — a fabulous trophy wife (Leslie Bibb), a loyal best pal/teammate (John C. Reilly), and so many endorsement deals that the only place on his car to fit a Fig Newton decal is his windshield. With the arrival of hotshot French driver Jean Girard (Sacha Baron Cohen), Ricky finds his world turned upside-down as he quickly loses everything in the wake of a massive car crash that prevents him from being able to get back behind the wheel. Thanks to the questionable training methods of his recently-returned father (including driving with a live cougar in the car) and the love of true-blue assistant Susan (Amy Adams), Bobby is able to overcome his fears and get back into form before facing Jean in the big final race.

A lot of this sounds promising, but *Talladega Nights*, like many of its characters, winds up going around in endless circles without really getting anywhere in the process. There is a huge cast of players on display here

## TALLADEGA NIGHTS

★★★☆☆  
(2 1/2 out of 4 stars)

DIRECTED BY ADAM MCKAY  
STARRING: WILL FERRELL,  
JOHN C. REILLY, GARY COLE,  
LESLIE BIBB, GREG GERMANN,  
AMY ADAMS, MICHAEL CLARKE DUNCAN  
110 MINUTES, RATED PG-13

— besides those already mentioned, there are also appearances from Michael Clarke Duncan, Jane Lynch, David Koechner and Andy Richter — but few of them get a chance to show their stuff. Take the character played by Amy Adams, whom you’ll remember from

her utterly endearing performance as the pregnant sister-in-law in *Junebug*. For most of the running time, her presence is so superfluous to the proceedings that you wonder a.) why the character is there in the first place and b.) why they bothered to hire Adams for such a nothing role. Finally, she gets a funny scene to perform — the inspirational speech that goads Ricky back into the racing game — and she hits the goofy tone so perfectly and hilariously that you wish she’d been given more to do in the rest of the film.

Ferrell and co-writer/director Adam McKay (*Anchorman*) never quite decide upon a tone with which to approach the material. At times, they seem to be satirizing the redneck culture that tends to be the clichéd view of NASCAR fans — Ricky names his two bratty kids Walker and Texas Ranger, and considers an evening at Applebee’s to be dining out “someplace special.” At other times, perhaps mindful that millions of NASCAR fans/potential ticket buyers might not be thrilled with being mocked, the two seem willing to pander to them, mostly with the walking, talking gay joke/French joke that is Girard, a character so bottomlessly evil that he walks into a roadhouse and plays Charlie Parker on the jukebox. Eventually, the film just gives up on trying to maintain a consistent tone and settles for a lot of elaborate car crashes.

see *TALLADEGA* on p. 20

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### Film Review

## Barnyard animals freak out



Kevin James voices Otis

### BARNYARD: THE ORIGINAL PARTY ANIMALS

★★☆☆☆  
(2 out of 4 stars)

DIRECTED BY STEVE OEDERK

STARRING: COURTNEY COX ARQUETTE,  
SAM ELLIOTT, DANNY GLOVER,  
KEVIN JAMES, WANDA SYKES,  
ANDIE MACDOWELL

90 MINUTES, RATED PG

by Jonathan W. Hickman

Having grown up on a farm, I can testify that cows are the ones with utters and bulls don't really have them. Perhaps for this reason, I was uncomfortable from the outset watching *Barnyard: The Original Party Animals* with my 2-and-a-half-year-old. While the film held her attention more than *Cars*, the adult portion of the audience was not so thrilled. In addition to the odd presence of an utter on the boy cows, there is a scene in which the younger bulls go joyriding in a stolen car drinking milk in a manner that would suggest inebriation. Drinking and driving in a kids' movie?

The story of *Barnyard* has potential. The farm animals party together all night long concealing their human characteristics from the humans during the day. When the coast is clear, the barn is converted in almost *Transformer* fashion to a roadhouse saloon with a stage, a bar, a mechanical human bucking bronco, and lots of drinking, gambling, and carousing. While the festive activities have the illusion of an adults-only affair, the mood is light and playful. The animals perform on the stage, singing songs and dancing up a storm. And that part is a lot of fun. My daughter and her friend stood up out of their seat and moved and hummed along.

But *Barnyard* isn't all fun and games. The farm animals are governed by a bull named Ben (voiced by the ubiquitous Sam Elliott). Ben's adopted son is Otis (Kevin James). Ben's relationship with Otis is a little strange because, at one point, Ben jokingly calls Otis his daughter. Given the presence of a feminine utter on Otis' stomach, this might

be possible. More likely, however, Otis is intended to be male, and his father's quip is intended as an insult. Otis carries on a Plutonic romance with a new but very pregnant cow named Daisy (Courtney Cox). Otis is an irresponsible teenager and very well liked by the other farm animals, despite their resentment of his tyrannical father.

Now, Ben is the farm's protector and leader. Since he is voiced by Elliott, everything Ben says has a measure of authority and even profundity to it. As the ruler, Ben is forced to remind the animals that they must be very careful, lest their true abilities be discovered by the farmer. Of course, the film doesn't explain why that would be a big deal. Perhaps, if the farmer were to find out that the animals liked to party at night, the fabric of our universe would be torn apart, but that's another movie.

As the protector of the farm, Ben does battle with the evil Coyotes, lead by the vicious Dag (David Koechner). Parents be warned: the Coyotes are scary creatures that seriously want to eat the chickens and anything else that stands in their way. In time, Ben will fall prey to the Coyotes overwhelming numbers, leaving Otis alone to fill Ben's big shoes. The change over from the Ben administration to an Otis one is abrupt. But given that the film's target audience is young children, the movie's 90 minute running time will be welcomed by parents. My daughter gets restless after half an hour or so. I've heard other parents justifiably complain that a feature film plus movie trailers is just too much, causing early departures from the theater when their children get tired of watching.

*Barnyard* is cute but it kind of freaked me out—utters on bulls and steers? Utterly bizarre. 🐮

Jonathan W. Hickman serves as Editor-in-Chief, columnist, film critic, and deep philosopher at Entertainment Insiders. For more writing by Jonathan W. Hickman, go to: [www.ElInsiders.com](http://www.ElInsiders.com)

### DESCENT from p. 12

up his sleeve other than gallons of blood, slime, and innards becoming outtards. The characters are nothing to write home about. Other than Macdonald, they are either one-note (Mendoza and Noone) or no-note (everyone else) and there is subsequently no discernible impact when they get killed off. The few vague innovations that Marshall throws in, such as having the creatures be blind after spending countless decades underground in the dark, are promising at first but wind up getting run into the ground—too many scenes of the women silently crouching in fright as the beasts slink past, inspiring the kind of questions of logic that need to be avoided for a movie of this type is to have any chance of succeeding. (If the other senses of the monsters have been exponentially heightened to make up for the loss of their vision, wouldn't they notice the heat of the flaming torches the women begin using.) At other times, Marshall just gets lazy. Having established the utter hopelessness of the women finding a path out other than by using their somewhat doubtful spelunking skills, he then all but drops a map into their laps—and he wraps things up with the kind of craptacular finale (one altered from the U.K. original) that seems to have been taken directly from one of the lesser *Nightmare on Elm Street* sequels.

Would I have enjoyed *The Descent* more if I had been able to experience it with completely fresh eyes instead of watching it knowing full well of both the hype and its single greatest moment? Possibly. I recall having debates with people who couldn't believe that I liked *The Blair Witch Project* and without fail, the ones who hated it were those who encountered it after the publicity kicked in and found that it didn't live up to the buzz. Then again, maybe not. Though not without its qualities and definitely a cut above the recent spate of useless remakes, it has more than enough flaws of its own that I might have been a little wary of it even without any of the promotional jibber-jabber. Like most of its characters, *The Descent* demonstrates some pretty fancy footwork for a while, only to suddenly and plunge into a vat of gore and gristle from which escape proves to be tragically impossible. 🐉

Peter Sobczynski writes for the *Liberty Suburban Chicago Newspapers* chain and on-line at [www.efilmcritic.com](http://www.efilmcritic.com). He can also be heard on the nationally syndicated *Mancow's Morning Madhouse* radio program. Comments, complaints, questions, threats and Milla Jovovich's phone number can be sent to him at [petersob@netzero.net](mailto:petersob@netzero.net).

# Deneuve, Depardieu true in *Times*



Catherine Deneuve in *Changing Times*

## CHANGING TIMES

★★★★

(4 out of 4 stars)

DIRECTED BY ANDRÉ TÉCHINÉ  
 STARRING: CATHERINE DENEUVE,  
 GÉRARD DEPARDIEU, GILBERT MELKI,  
 MALIK ZIDI, LUBNA AZABAL  
 95 MINUTES, NOT RATED

by Janos Gereben

Though advertisements abroad promulgate the combined forces giants Catherine Deneuve and Gérard Depardieu, *Changing Times* (Les Temps qui Changent) is no celebrity parade. Instead, French luminary André Téchiné made something splendidly different with *Changing Times*, a miracle of an intelligent story realized by a deft directorial touch and memorable performances. Not since Arnaud Desplechin's *Kings and Queen* has there been such a literate, masterful shadow play of reality on the silver screen.

Characters, relationships, and events are all (except one) believable, realistic, even ordinary, and yet mysterious and meaningful. As in life (but not in Hollywood), Téchiné's photographic images have the richness of fine paintings.

The grand, sophisticated superstructure of *Changing Times* is

built on a deceptively simple plot. Depardieu is Antoine, an engineer from Paris who has long campaigned for a difficult construction project in Tangiers. His purpose is to see his first (and only) love Cecile (Deneuve) and pick up where they left off 30 years before.

Neither a tragedy of frustrated passions nor a rose-colored, happy-end comedy, the film brilliantly highlights the conflict between tedious reality and the unblemished magic of unfulfilled yearning.

"Only women love like this," somebody says of Antoine. (The originator of these words is perhaps unfamiliar with Tristan, Romeo, Cyrano, or any number of heroically romantic men.) What's fascinating about Antoine is that he is both a hero on an impossible quest and an all-too-real person. Deneuve's Cecile is both attractive and full of bad moods and behavior that should put anyone (but Antoine) off her scent.

Against the backdrop of a picture-perfect Tangiers, the ensemble cast performs wonderfully, and the individuals are as equally magnificent when considered as the whole.

The most remarkable performance comes from Lubna Azabal. This young, Belgian-born Arab actress, already familiar from *Paradise Now*, plays both twin Moroccan sisters: the Westernized, drug-addled lover of Cecile's son, and a devout, impoverished Moslem woman, who works at McDo (that's what McDonald's is called there). Relationships of the two women with each other and with the rest of the characters are wonderfully distinguished, as much by silences and omissions as by what is said. One of Téchiné's many sophisticated devices is giving just enough indication for the audience to figure out the possible future of the sisters. Through it all, Azabal is mesmerizing, and creates two distinct and unforgettable characters. ♪

York as Baroness Elsa Shraeder is as delightfully acquisitive as was Eleanor Parker was in the film.

Andrea Bowen plays the eldest daughter, Leisl, to great effect. There isn't much dancing in *The Sound of Music*, but she performs two numbers wonderfully well. I was sitting up close and watching her feet. The Bowl is so huge that if you aren't up that close, her dancing might not have the same impact.

The best part of the movie for me has always been "Laendler," the

Austrian folk dance during which Maria and the Captain fall in love. Director Robert Wise, Julie Andrews, and Christopher Plummer played this to such wonderful effect that it is still the highlight of the film for me. Unfortunately, there isn't the same magical chemistry between Schneider and Errico when they do the dance that was achieved in the movie.

But these are just trifles. *The Sound of Music* is about the best of American music and it's a rare pleasure to sit under the stars and enjoy it with such a brilliant production. ♪

# Head has heart

## BROTHERS OF THE HEAD

★★★☆☆

(3 out of 4 stars)

DIRECTED BY KEITH FULTON, LOUIS PEPE  
 STARRING: LUKE TREADWAY,  
 HARRY TREADWAY, TANIA EMERY,  
 SEAN HARRIS, BRYAN DICK,  
 KEN RUSSELL, TOM BOWER  
 90 MINUTES, RATED R

by Jonathan W. Hickman

Twin brothers Tom and Barry Howe couldn't be more different. One's shy and introverted; the other's outgoing and aggressive. But because they share a liver and some internal organs, they will have a lifetime to drive one another crazy.

A mockumentary feature with clearly developed narrative elements, *Brothers of the Head* takes a familiar approach to the rock-and-roll bio pick, only here the subjects are conjoined twins, played by real life twins

Luke and Harry Treadaway. The story begins as a slumping music producer signs the boys in hopes of creating a music sensation. The boys leave their isolated home and are trained to become musicians. The result is surprising as their youth and their physical limitations provide fodder for angst-filled lyrics worthy of Kurt Cobain. (Really great rock music is often the product of the pain of maturation, and the talent for it is often lost with the passing of youth.) While the story arch is expected, the performances are top notch and the casting deliciously eclectic—director Ken Russell (*Altered States* and the Oscar Nominated *Women In Love*) colorfully plays himself, and the familiar but underrated actor Tom Bower appears as a documentary filmmaker.

*Brothers* works mainly because it is constantly evolving, sometimes in shocking ways. It is delightfully funny in places, and in one scene the brothers reluctantly take to the stage to perform in a bar with thrill-

ing results. But once the boys find their place in the music business, the film loses steam, settling down into familiar territory focusing on the problems associated with success. Of course, the problems experienced by rock stars who are also Siamese twins are not typical at all, so even when the film follows the typical formulas, it remains interesting. When the new rock stars catch the attention of women, physical intimacy presents some unique problems. Privacy has always been impossible for them both, and the presence of a camera crew filming a documentary about them makes things even worse. During moments, I almost felt the need to look away from the screen out of respect for the boys. But the movie doesn't want us to do that, capitalizing on sheer train wreck fascination value to maintain interest through the slow portions.

There is no doubt that, without the central gimmick, this movie

wouldn't really work. Medical oddities continue to fascinate the curious, just as they did in traveling carnivals of times past. Today, instead of a live sideshow, stories about people born with debilitating deformities appear on cable television. But *Brothers of the Head* sells the



Luke and Harry Treadaway

premise so well that you might find yourself believing that the two actors really were born attached to one another. The style of the film plays into this illusion by altering the image quality to appear as though it is old film stock. And interviews throughout reflect on past events that seem cleverly real.

While thinking about this film, I was reminded of a documentary called *Emmanuel's Gift* in which a young man from Ghana rides his bicycle across country on one leg to bring attention to the plight of the disabled. Although *Brothers of the Head* is not likely to call a nation to action, it's an entertaining film with more to offer than mere sideshow exploitation. ♪

Jonathan W. Hickman serves as Editor-in-Chief, columnist, film critic, and deep philosopher at [www.EInsiders.com](http://www.EInsiders.com)

# Echo Park's changing culture

Co-directors and partners Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland talk about how their film *Quinceañera* dramatizes the gradual gentrification of a Latino neighborhood, exploring both gay and ethnic issues in the process

Featured: Chalo González as Uncle Thomas. Inset: Actors Emily Rios and Jesse Garcia. Writer/directors Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland

by Michael Guillén

*Quinceañera* gracefully dances between tradition and innovation, cognizant that without such a dalliance neither can exist. Co-directors and real-life partners Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland won the Audience Award and the Grand Jury Prize at this year's Sundance Film Festival. With great enthusiasm, they sat down with me in the Mark Hopkins Ambassador room in San Francisco to discuss their hit film.

**Michael Guillén:** You guys have made a lovely film. Let's go into its humble origins. I understand you had a neighbor who wanted you to photograph her *quinceañera*. What was it that you saw that pulled you in to shoot a feature?

**Richard Glatzer:** Yeah, we did photograph our next-door neighbor's *quinceañera* and we were amazed by the ceremony, by the months of preparation, by the fact that all these teenage kids with teenage hormones and teenage energy took it so seriously, were learning these formal waltzes and so on. We were amazed at the contrast between these very old traditions and the surrounding culture of contemporary L.A. We were also amazed by what a communal kind of thing it is because many people handle different aspects of the *quinceañera* so that a very poor family can have an elaborate day—

**Wash Westmoreland:** Lots of donations through the *padrino/madrino* [godparents]—

**Richard:** I remember saying to Wash, "This should be a movie," but didn't really think we were going to be the ones to do it. But a few months later, we were sitting around on New Years Day 2005, and we

were talking about our block and our neighborhood and how fascinating it is that there were such different cultures door-to-door — one right next to the other — and that it would be a really fertile ground for a film. Within two hours, we had our characters. We had the idea of two teenagers coming of age: Magdalena and her cousin Carlos. We just found ourselves really compelled by the idea of kids who were rejected by their immediate families and had to form a kind of outsider family with their great-uncle. Wash should talk about the great uncle.

**Wash:** The great-uncle to me is the heart of the movie.

**Michael:** Yes, he is.

**Wash:** I think the way Chalo González played that character is just incredible. He's 81 years old, and this is his first starring role. He brought this lifetime of experience into that role. From the writing point of view, the inspiration for the *Tio* [Uncle] Tomas character was actually my own great-uncle who was a Yorkshire man who was a bachelor [late in life]. He was my grandmother's twin. He just had this wonderful attitude. When I was around 11 years old, he came and actually moved in as a parent to look after us. He was a non-judgmental mentor. He didn't

care—I was having problems coming out sexually and all that kind of adolescent stuff—and he just didn't care. He was very non-judgmental. He was just accepting. And so when we thought of these two kids being thrown out of their houses for sexual reasons, we thought the third piece of the puzzle would be the *Tio* Tomas character, and that he'd be the glue that'd make the new family stick together.

**Michael:** I loved the scene where his back is to the camera and he says to Carlos, "Are you seeing your special friend? I'm glad you have a special friend." That was such a subtle epiphany. Absolutely beautifully staged and beautifully filmed, beautifully enacted, I was so impressed.

**Wash:** We tried to keep a lot of the very deep felt emotions in the movie, not to overplay them, not to spoon feed them to the audience, but just to allow the characters a dignity in how they express those emotions. I think what *Tio* Tomas is saying to Carlos is this unconditional love he's giving him, and he's just letting him know that he knows and it's fine. But he does it in the most offhand way and I think that's what gives it its emotional power.

**Michael:** People either really love this film or they just don't get it

and find it inaccessible. As a Chicano, it gets on my nerves when I read, "Who's going to care about these characters?" What's the answer? Who is going to care about these characters?

**Richard:** When the film was up for distributors to buy it, there was a certain amount of concern that the Latino public can't accept a film with a gay component in it. We thought that was a racist, stupid, antiquated approach. I don't dare generalize about the Latino public because I'm not Latino. But I'm thinking things are changing. They have to be. Post-*Brokeback Mountain*, is [gay content] such a subversive thing to have in a film about a Latino community? I don't think so.

**Wash:** It's interesting as well, [five years ago] we moved into a Latino community as a white gay couple and we thought, "Oh, are people going to be keeping their distance?" No one did. We were accepted on our street, which was a very nice thing. No one made a big deal out of it. I feel the film addresses the issues in a way that's not in your face. A lot of people can go see the film and go along with the story. There's certainly a mirror in Carlos' story line between the homophobia of his parents who reject him in the Latino community and the coded racism of the white gay couple. We want to put those issues out there for people to talk about and discuss. And yet, if a piece of art works, it's meant to create some friction and it's meant to have some detractors because that's what you're trying to do — question people's attitudes and shake things up a bit.

**Richard:** If everybody were complacent with the film, you'd feel like, "Maybe we're not touching any

material that has any charge to it." **Wash:** We wanted to make a sugarcoated subversion.

**Michael:** I walked away from this film troubled by some things. One of them was [the way the film exposes] "coded racism" among gay people. As a gay man myself, I've been at that dinner party [where racist words are spoken by gays] one too many times. [Laughs.] The gentrification process of Echo Park, which is often attached to gay men, this was a sticky wicket. I know some critics have more-or-less insinuated that there is a reverse discrimination in cinematic representation going on in your film. This is as intriguing as it is troubling for me. I recently interviewed Larry Clark of *Wassup Rockers* where the same criticism has been levied. What is your response to that critique that you have caricatured whites and gays while glorifying Latinos?

**Richard:** The white gay couple in the film are not the most positive people on the planet, but—

**Michael:** But they're real.

**Richard:** For us they're very real. If you listen to their dialogue, you understand the parameters of their relationship. There is an economic disparity. One is working and paying the bills, the other one only works intermittently. They've bought a house that they can't really afford. There's a lot of friction because of the economics of the situation. They also have certain parameters in their sex life where it's okay to have threeways, it's not okay to have separate affairs. Carlos falls into this spider's web of conflicting emotions [and ends up getting hurt].

**Wash:** But we're not saying white people are bad. We're saying these people are in a situation and they're economically blinkered and they're also emotionally blinkered as to

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what Carlos' needs are from [the threeway] relationship. Also, Carlos' parents are equally blinkered because they're not allowing him to embrace his sexuality. They've thrown him out of the house because they've found out where he's been going on the Internet. There's no Latino good; white people bad.

**Richard:** There's a whole range of Latino characters in the film. There are people like Carlos' parents who are narrow-minded and also the girls in Magadena's group turn very nasty once they find out she's pregnant. We've been accused of turning all the Latino characters into saints but if you look at the film that's hardly the case. There's also a white woman who is a liberal trying to be open and understanding. So we don't feel it's a legitimate complaint.

**Michael:** I don't think it is either and I must commend you for tackling the two themes: both coded racism and the eroticized fetishism of a young Latino male. My story is very similar to Carlos'. I left home at 15. I entered the arena of love hoping to get the support I had not received from my family and was consumed by a subculture that used me up and didn't really care about my particular needs. For me the moment when Carlos overhears the white couple's argument and realizes the guy doesn't love him was heartbreaking because he realizes he's been used.

**Wash:** Yeah, he's been used.

**Michael:** And I found that very touching.

**Wash:** Thank you very much. Yeah, in the film everyone's talking about the hot real estate market and we wanted to say, "Well, what's it like from the point of view of the renters?" Similarly: hot Latin guy, threeway, sexual excitement. What's it like from the point of view of the plaything? Carlos has gained all his information about sexuality through the Internet, which is how I think a lot of people nowadays find out about their sexuality. Before he actually physically comes into contact with any gay people, he's developed very much a sense of himself just through this new technology. When he goes into a white, gay party for the first time, he knows he's very much [on the margin] of mainstream gay culture. But he needs someone to reach out to him and show him that it's okay to be gay. In the end, he finds this in his younger cousin who's pregnant and his uncle. That's where he gets his acceptance from. ☞

## Film Interview



# Growing up fast

a chat with the "kids" from the Sundance award-winner *Quinceañera*

by Michael Guillén

I showed up at the Ritz Carlton for my interviews with the team from *Quinceañera* wearing my new Steve Barretto "Brown Jesus" t-shirt that I picked up at the deYoung's *Chicano Visions* exhibit. Jesse Garcia found the t-shirt "awesome" and Emily Rios found it "cool" and they were both disappointed that they wouldn't get to be in San Francisco long enough to check out the exhibit themselves. They were scheduled to fly out mid-afternoon to Denver after a full day of interviews and photo shoots. I was glad I'd brought the exhibition catalog with me so I could at least show them Carmen Lomas Garza's painting *Quinceañera*, which I felt they should see and which they much enjoyed. All the *Quinceañeras* were in town!

**Michael Guillén:** Emily, Jesse, I appreciate the two of you taking the time to talk with me because I'm so proud of both of you. I love this film. What was so beautiful to me about *Quinceañera* — because I've studied Chicano art and film for a long time — what was challenging about the film and why I think it's an important film, is it explores many marginalized areas. I'm Chicano myself and I'm so pleased to see this representation. You're both — well, not so much unknowns anymore—but you came out of nowhere and this little sleeper hit took Sundance by storm and has been impressing people all over the place. Could you tell me a little bit about your backgrounds?

**Emily Rios:** Both of my parents are from Jalisco. I'm joking. Background? As far as acting-wise?

**Michael:** Acting-wise, yes, but is your family actually from Jalisco?

**Emily:** Yeah, and as far as my acting, on top of my resume was Cleopatra in a high school play. So I didn't have a lot of experience. I'd done commercials here and there, one short film, extra work on a music video.

**Michael:** How did they find you?

**Emily:** My agent called me and said, "Hey, you know they're auditioning people for this independent film called *Quinceañera*." And I was like, "Okay, cool." I auditioned and I got extremely fortunate.

**Michael:** They were fortunate.

**Emily:** Thanks.

**Jesse Garcia:** We were all fortunate. I did a casting workshop in Atlanta probably four years ago with this casting director, Jason Wood. I was on the *Nosotros* email list — it's a Latino networking organization in L.A. — and I saw this casting for *Quinceañera* and I read the breakdown for Carlos and was like, "Ah, this role seems really cool." I emailed Jason and I said, "Hey man, I'd love to read for this if you guys are still looking for the part." They brought me in and I did all right.

**Michael:** Jesse, is your family also from Mexico?

**Jesse:** My dad is. From the state of Durango. My mom is from Wyoming. She and I were born in the same town in Wyoming — Rawlins, Wyoming.

**Michael:** I know Rawlins. I used to work there.

**Jesse:** No kidding?!

**Michael:** My stepfather was a sheep-shearing contractor so we would go up into the hills a lot and station ourselves in little towns in Wyoming and Montana.

**Jesse:** Wow. I've never even met anyone else that's even heard of it!

**Michael:** I know it. It's a good thing you got away.

**Jesse:** [Laughs.] Right. Everyone would say that. My family's still there. My mom's Spanish and Mexican and other. We still

don't really know what all of our genealogy is — I think that's the word, isn't it?

**Michael:** Yes, it is. I have to ask you a pointed question: do you actually have a tattoo that says "travieso" [troublemaker] on your abdomen?

**Jesse:** [Chuckles.] No. It's tattooed on my *soul*.

**Michael:** I thought that was hilarious and sexy. So, Emily, are you actually from Echo Park, the neighborhood in the movie?

**Emily:** I grew up in a city similar to Echo Park in El Monte, it's in the San Diego Valley.

**Michael:** Because the gentrification issues were interesting and are ongoing concerns as these cultures collide, as gays move into Latino neighborhoods. I was likewise impressed with your complex representation of a young gay cholo, Jesse. This film has had a mixed reception, partly based on those issues. Some people like it a lot, like me. If I would have been at Sundance I would have been jumping up and down. And other people *don't* like it. And that range of reaction is curious to me. Is it a cultural bias, do you think?

**Jesse:** I hear that too. It's kind of surprising and it's kind of not at the same time. The teen pregnancy and the gay issues can be very hush

hush in Latino culture because it's not something you really want out there, you know? But I think that once more people start to see this movie for what it is and the social issues that it brings up, that people may eventually open up, especially those skeptics who are not supporting the movie because of the gay issue and the teen pregnancy, especially Latino culture. From what I hear they don't want to bring these issues out into the open because they think it's shaming the Latino culture, which is naïve because it's actually probably going to help kids and people who have these issues, you know what I'm saying?

**Michael:** Exactly. I'm always concerned for queer youth because it's a difficult time fraught with hazard. Both of your characters' stories, they're heart stories, to be ostracized from family and to be marginalized and to have to survive. I had to. I left home at 15. You have to survive and often there's not anything or anyone out there to help you. When I was reading the critical response for *Quinceañera*, something got my goat: this idea of reverse discrimination in cinematic representation. Some of the reviews I read said, "They're so unfair to white people. They're so unfair to gay people. They've glorified the

see *QUINCEAÑERA* on p. 20



Jesse Garcia is Carlos and Emily Rios is Magdalena in the Echo Park coming-of-age story *Quinceañera*

Photos courtesy of Sony Pictures Classics

Movie Listings

Now Playing...



Will Ferrell also co-wrote his latest film, *Talladega Nights* (p. 13)

**Barnyard**  
★★ (PG)

Please see review on p. 14.  
ArcLight Cinemas Hollywood, AMC Theatres Magic Johnson Theatre, Mann Glendale Exchange, AMC Loews Universal Studios and IMAX Theater, Pacific's Paseo 14, AMC Theatres Burbank, AMC Theatres Burbank Town Center 8

**The Break-Up**  
★★ (PG-13)

One might be inclined to walk into a screening of *The Break-Up* thinking that the title says it all. Except in this case, it doesn't. Now if the film had the more appropriate title of "The Argument," then that would have been more like it. (SM) Mann Beverly Center Cinema

**Brothers of the Head**  
★★★ (R)

Please see review p. 15.  
Landmark Nuart Theatre

**Cars**

★★★ 1/2 (G)

Pixar is unique in the history of movies. It's the only studio not to have ever produced a flop. Even Walt Disney himself during his heyday would produce the occasional financial disaster. But not Pixar. The only bad movie they ever produced was a short called *Boundin'* and that doesn't really count, which leaves expectations so high as to cause breathing trouble to see them up close. (EL) Mann Beverly Center Cinema, AMC Theatres Burbank, Regency Valley Plaza

**Cease Fire**

(Not reviewed) (NR)

This Documentary follows two young girls from opposite ends of a conflict in Europe in 1995. Sanina, who is from Sarajevo and Ciara, who lives in Belfast, are communicate through satellite. The two girls create a dialogue about their lives and ideas. They are also able to view the way war has affected their respective cities. (JC) Laemmle Music Hall Theatre, Laemmle Town Center Theatre

**The Celestine Prophecy Movie**

0 stars (Not Rated)

Director Armand Mastroianni's new film adaption of the James Redfield's novel of the same name follows John Woodson (Mathew Settle) as he travels into the Peruvian jungle in search of an ancient scroll, called The Celestine Prophecy, which contains nine insights on the state of humanity and consciousness. (JC) Laemmle Fairfax Cinemas, Laemmle One Colorado, Laemmle Fallbrook 7

**Changing Times**

★★★★ (Not Rated)

Please see our review on page 15.  
Laemmle Sunset 5 Theatre, Landmark Nu-Wilshire

**Clerks II**

★★★ 1/2 (PG-13)

This film probably won't bring new fans into the Kevin Smith camp, but it contains a number of big laughs. You may recognize yourself or your friends in the characters on screen and you may even find yourself examining your own life choices afterwards. And, I can almost guarantee that you will think twice before getting into an argument with anyone working behind the counter of a fast-food joint before receiving your meal. (PS) University Village 3, Cinespace, ArcLight Cinemas Hollywood, AMC Theatres Magic Johnson Theatre, Mann Glendale Exchange 10, AMC Loews Universal Studios and IMAX Theater, AMC Theatres Burbank, Mann Beverly Center Cinema, Academy 6

**Click**

★★ (PG-13)

Since a magical remote control turns out to be the cause of Adam Sandler's problems in his latest comedy, I couldn't help but hope that a real fast-forward button would appear out of nowhere and bail me out of the last 40 minutes. That's because despite an amusing set-up that aims higher than you'd expect from a Sandler comedy, *Click* tunes out with an ending that's sappy, redundant and not nearly as funny as the hour or so that preceded it. (SM) Mann Beverly Center Cinema, Regency Valley Plaza

**Da Vinci Code, The**

★★ 1/2 (PG-13)

Time to state the obvious: the movie was NEVER going to be as good as the book and everyone knows it. Remember the first *Harry Potter* film or *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. Both were fine films, but you can't do things as nuanced as some novels and remain faithful unless you've got a miniseries lasting a total of four or five hours. This is not to say that Akiva Goldsman and Ron Howard didn't TRY. They did a damn fine job of doing an almost exact transcription of the Dan Brown novel, but the simple fact is that the book was better at when expectorating conspiracy theories than doing chases. (EL)

Mann Beverly Center Cinema, Academy 6

**The Descent**

★★★★ 1/2 from WC (R)  
★★ from PS

See two contrasting reviews on page 12.  
Flagship's University Village 3, AMC Theatres Magic Johnson Theatre, Mann Chinese 6, Mann Glendale Exchange 10, AMC Loews Universal Studios and IMAX Theater, Pacific's Paseo 14, Pacific's Culver Stadium 12, AMC Theatres Burbank

**Devil Wears Prada**

★★★ (PG-13)

The concept of fashion as art is a theme given a proper send-up in *The Devil Wears Prada*. And when that art is worn by the likes of Meryl Streep, you can forgive the softness of the film. *Prada* deals with adult issues but handles adult situations from a distance to make it appropriate viewing for a large audience spectrum. And while this may help at the box office, it waters down the effectiveness of the story. Streep carries the film. (JH) ArcLight Hollywood, Mann Glendale Exchange 10, Laemmle One Colorado Cinemas, AMC Theatres Burbank, The Bridge: cinema de lux

**The Groomsmen**

★★ (R)

Paulie (Edward Burns, who also wrote and directed the film) is experiencing cold feet a week before he is supposed to marry his pregnant girlfriend Sue (Brittany Murphy) and decides to do a lot of drinking and talking with four of his old buddies as a last rite of bachelorhood. The five friends laugh, argue and fight over issues like fatherhood, marriage, becoming an adult, and the revealed homosexuality of one them. (JC) AMC AMC Theatres Covina 30

**Heading South**

★★ (Not Rated)

This French film explores the bleak side of *How Stella Got Her Groove Back*. In this case it is the late 1970's and Stella is instead a North American affluent WASP named Ellen (Charlotte Rampling) who travels with her friends to Haiti where they are treated to sexual favors from beautifully built natives in exchange for gifts and borderline-motherly affection. The paradise setting is slowly interrupted by outside tension as the Macoute militia challenges the Duvalier regime. (JC) Laemmle Royal

**An Inconvenient Truth**

★★★★ (PG)

Is Al Gore doing a Chicken Little act in *An Inconvenient Truth*? I wish he were. This stunning documentary about global warming is a well-reasoned, clearly-proven, intelligent, cogent, irresistible torrent of scientific data, in a curiously fun, engaging, often funny presentation. What an entertaining horror movie this is! (JG) Laemmle Grand, ArcLight Cinemas Hollywood, Laemmle Playhouse 7, Majestic Crest, Pacific's Sherman Oaks 5, Laemmle Monica

**John Tucker Must Die**

★ (PG-13)

Ashanti, Sophia Bush and Brittany Snow find out that they are all dating the same guy, John Tucker played by Jesse Metcalfe. The three scorned lovers devise a plot of revenge for their former beau, attempting to turn the tables in game of heartbreak. (JC) ArcLight Cinemas Hollywood, AMC Theatres Magic Johnson Theatre, AMC Loews Universal Studios and IMAX Theater, AMC Theatres Burbank, AMC Theatres Burbank Town Center 8

**Lady in the Water**

★ (PG-13)

How could the writer/director who gave us such crisply paced, serious-minded, and intriguing works as *The Sixth Sense*, *Unbreakable*, and *Signs* (up until its dreadful final reel) also be responsible for one of the most convoluted and incompetent films to come around in a long time? Hell, even *The Village*, which was generally derided, contained a basic storyline one could follow. Watching M. Night Shyamalan's *Lady in the Water* is like listening to someone trying to tell a long and elaborate joke, forgetting to include important information and endlessly doubling back. (PS) ArcLight Cinemas Hollywood, AMC Theatres Magic Johnson Theatre, Mann Glendale Exchange 10, AMC Loews Universal Studios and IMAX Theater, AMC Theatres Burbank

**The Lake House**

★★ 1/2 (PG)

A time warp allows architect Alex Wyler (Keanu Reeves) to correspond with Doctor Kate Forster (Sandra Bullock). Forster lives in the future. Not all that far in the future, about two years to be exact. And as luck would have it they live in the same house. In Forster's future Alex moved out well before. Reeves and Bullock both do a decent job, and Christopher Plummer as Alex's father delightfully chews the scenery. *The Lake House* is a one hankie weepy for gals who really don't want to see any of the superhero action flicks that usually come out this time of year. (EL) Mann Beverly Center Cinema

**La Moustache**

★★★ (NR)

A simple argument over facial hair between Marc Thiriez (Vincent Lindon) and his wife Agnes (Emmanuelle Devos) leads to a crisis of identity and existence when Marc shaves off his moustache. Marc is continually told that things he once held dear — his friends, his father, even his moustache — have never existed. As Marc tries to escape from his crisis, the plot becomes as fragile as his reality, ending with suspense and ambiguity, while still full of symbolism. (JC) Laemmle Fairfax Cinemas, Laemmle Fallbrook 7

**Little Man**

1/2 star (R)

Calvin (Marlon Wayans) is a midget criminal who along with idiot colleague Percy (Tracy Morgan) is forced a ditch a stolen diamond inside the purse of rising Chicago businesswoman Vanessa (Kerry Washington). After following Vanessa and her husband home, Percy and Calvin hit upon the perfect idea — they will dress Calvin up as a baby and leave him on their doorstep in a basket, and when they take him in, he can grab the diamond and sneak out. You might enjoy this film if don't require actual humor in your comedies, or if you simply want to peep inside the freak show to see if it really is as bad as it looks. Answer: it is. (PS) University Village 3, AMC Theatres Magic Johnson Theatre, Mann Glendale Exchange, Mann Beverly Center Cinema, AMC Loews Universal Studios and IMAX Theater, Pacific's Paseo, AMC Theatres Burbank Town Center 8



Sandra Oh is compelling but under-used in *The Night Listener* (p. 11)

**Little Miss Sunshine**

★★★★ 1/2 (R)

When *Little Miss Sunshine* debuted at Sundance earlier this year, it was one of the most buzzed-about films at the fest, partly because Steve Carrell, fresh off the success of *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*, was in the film, and partly because, well, it's just a funny movie. *Little Miss Sunshine* tells the story of the Hoovers, a middle-class family from Albuquerque headed by desperate motivational speaker Richard (Greg Kinear) and homemaker Sheryl (Toni Collette), who also has to look after her gay, suicidal, Proust-Scholar brother Frank (Steve Carell). Further tensions arise from a heroin addicted grandpa and mute-by-choice son. Despite economic troubles, the family decides to travel to Redondo Beach so that daughter Olive (Abigail Breslin) can compete in a beauty pageant. (KV) ArcLight Cinemas Hollywood, Laemmle Playhouse 7, AMC Theatres Century City 15, Laemmle Monica

**Monster House**

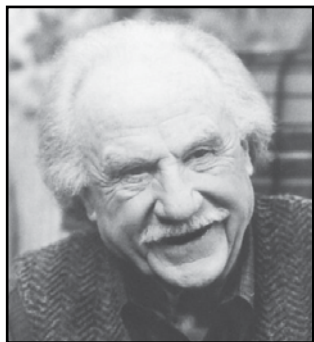
★★★★ (PG)

Motion-capture animation created a successful stir with *The Polar Express*, graduated to the creation of Gollum and Kong in the Peter Jackson franchises, and has now been lifted a notch higher in Gil Kenan's *Monster House*. Here, unlike *The Polar Express*, the characters are more expressive, not less, as animation frees them from the limits of natural motion. I won't say the movie is an instant classic, but I will say the technical wizardry is fun and appealing. (MG) AMC Theatres Magic Johnson Theatre, AMC Loews Universal Studios and IMAX Theater, AMC Theatres Burbank



JACK WARDEN Died July 19, 2006

By Rusty White



Oscar-nominated and Emmy-winning actor Jack Warden died after a lengthy illness at age 85. Warden was nominated for two Best Supporting Actor Oscars. In 1975, Mr. Warden was nominated for his role in the Hal Ashby film Shampoo. He was also nominated for a BAFTA for Shampoo, where he portrays the business tycoon to whom Warren Beatty appeals for a loan to start his hair salon. In 1978, Warden played a football coach in the Beatty directed Heaven Can Wait — this remake of Here Comes Mr. Jordan was a huge hit and retains its magic through repeated viewings. Warden was nominated for a Best Supporting Actor for Heaven Can Wait. The award went to Christopher Walken in The Deer Hunter. Jack Warden also costarred with Warren Beatty in the political comedy Bulworth.

Warden is remembered by TV fans for his hit comedy/detective series Crazy Like a Fox. The show ran from 1984 to 1986. Warden was nominated for two Emmy Awards for the show. He won an Emmy for Outstanding Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role in a Drama for his portrayal of Chicago Bear's head coach George Halas in the 1971 TV movie Brian's Song.

Warden appeared in over 150 films and TV shows. He became a professional boxer during the 1930's. He later served in the U.S. Navy in China, then the Merchant Marines, and finally the

Army as part of the 101st Airborne during WWII. After the war, Warden pursued an acting career. He learned his craft and began acting on stage in the late 1940's. He made his Broadway debut in the early 1950's.

Warden and Lee Marvin both made their film debut in the comedy You're In the Navy Now. After a supporting role in From Here To Eternity and work on TV, Mr. Warden gained notice as one of the jurors in the classic film 12 Angry Men. Bigger roles on TV and in film followed. His biggest period of success came in the 1970's. But his impressive list of credits in the 50's and 60's include Wagon Train, The Twilight Zone, The Untouchables, Bonanza, Donovan's Reef, the original version of The Thin Red Line, and Run Silent Run Deep.

In addition to the films already mentioned, Mr. Warden contributed his acting skills to such films as Who Is Harry Kellerman and Why Is He Saying Those Terrible Things About Me?, The Man Who Loved Cat Dancing, The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz, All the President's Men, Raid on Entebbe, Death on the Nile, ...And Justice For All, and Being There. These last two credits showed Mr. Warden's lighter side. I loved his suicidal/homicidal judge in ...And Justice For All. He played twin brothers in the hilarious Kurt Russell comedy Used Cars. He returned to serious drama as Paul Newman's friend and fellow attorney in Sidney Lumet's The Verdict.

The later part of Jack Warden's career included good TV and hit-or-miss films. His later credits include Problem Child, Ed, The Presidio, Night and the City, Bullets Over Broadway, Mighty Aphrodite and The Replacements.

Hi there! If you discover a mistake that needs to be corrected or have a tip for a film industry obituary that I have overlooked please feel free to contact me. I would appreciate it if you would send links to news articles confirming any tips. Also, with all of the computer viruses out there, please do not send e-mails with attachments. I automatically delete those. You can contact me at Rusty@einsiders.com. Thanks!

My Super Ex Girlfriend

★★ (PG-13) My Super Ex-Girlfriend has so much going for it — a promising premise, a director adept at handling both comedy and large-scale special effects, and the ideal actress in the title role. Unfortunately, it never manages to catch fire. My Super Ex-Girlfriend is a sour, unpleasant, and vaguely misogynistic mess that becomes even more frustrating during the isolated moments where things do come together, only to fall to pieces once again. (PS) AMC Theatres Magic Johnson Theatre, AMC Loews Universal Studios and IMAX Theatre, AMC Theatres Burbank Town Center 6

Nacho Libre

★★ (PG) Jared Hess' sporadically funny Nacho Libre is a messy film carried through on the misanthropic charisma of its lead Jack Black. Lots of unique sketch type comedy can't make this incomplete story work. And this despite some inspired moments from anti-star Black. (JH) Regency Valley Plaza

The Night Listener

★★★ (R) Please see our review on page 11. Five Star Theatres Los Feliz 3, ArcLight Cinemas Hollywood, AMC Theatres Magic Johnson Theatre, Mann Glendale Exchange 10, AMC Loews Universal Studios and IMAX Theater, Laemmle Playhouse 7, Mann Culver Plaza, AMC Theatres Burbank, The Bridge: cinema de lux, AMC Theatres Century City 15, AMC Theatres Avco Cinema, Pacific's Hastings 8

The Oh in Ohio

★★★ 1/2 (R) Priscilla (Parkery Posey) is a beautiful and successful executive at a corporation designed to attract business to Cleveland. Her marriage to husband Jack (Paul Rudd) and her life seem to be going very well, except for the fact that she has to deal with the colossal bummer of never having had an orgasm. There are several funny, touching, and even sexy moments in writer-director Billy Kent's depiction of Priscilla's chaotic sexual awakening. But an uneven tone that wanders as aimlessly as the movie's heroine causes The Oh in Ohio to come off as patchy & incomplete. (JC) Academy 6

Only Human

★★★ (R) What should have been a standard trip home to Spain for television reporter Leni (Marian Aguilera) becomes a bit tense when she announces to her Jewish family that her new boyfriend Rafi (Guillermo Toledo) is Palestinian. It also doesn't help that Leni's family is a bit on the quirky side, with an overly anxious mother Gloria (Norma Aleandro), boistrous father Ernesto (Mario Martin), and awkwardly straight brother David (Fernando Ramallo). Worse still, Rafi is prone to embarrassing situations. (JC) Laemmle Fallbrook 7

Over The Hedge

★★★ (PG) This computer-animated big screen adaptation of the popular comic strip series created by Michael Fry and T

Lewis is a clever, charming and often funny movie that the whole family can enjoy. (SM) Regency Valley Plaza

Peaceful Warrior

★ (PG-13) When college gymnast Dan Millman (Scott Mechlowicz) suffers a serious injury, the limitations of his abilities seem irreversible. That is until he meets Socrates (Nick Nolte) a strange man who can channel different levels of physical and mental power. Along with a young lady named Joy (Amy Smart), the two help Dan to become a "peaceful warrior" and find his place in the world. (JC) Academy 6

Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest

★★★ (PG-13) A relatively entertaining film often hobbled by a rambling screenplay and a running time about thirty minutes longer than necessary. The real selling point is the magnificently fruity Johnny Depp as Captain Jack Sparrow. He has here taken the role far beyond mere impression into the kind of demented realm that only the most supremely confident of performers ever dare to enter. In a film that comes close to proving that there really can be too much of a good thing, Depp somehow manages to leave audiences hungry for more. (PS) Laemmle Grande, The Five Star Theatres Vista Theatre, Akarakan Theatres Highland 3, AMC Theatres Magic Johnson Theatre, Mann Glendale Marketplace 4, El Capitan, AMC Loews Universal Studios and IMAX Theater, AMC Theatres Burbank, AMC Theatres Burbank Town Center 6

A Prairie Home Companion

★★★★ (PG-13) Robert Altman's star-studded ensemble piece was inspired by Garrison Keillor's understated, unpretentious radio show from a mythical, benign, heartwarming, American hinterland. Altman's direction is as laid-back and unostentatiously clever as Keillor's show. With Keillor himself as writer and self-effacing star, Altman comes up with a wonderfully substantial, light-hearted and wistful film. In it, the radio show is taking place in the shadow of its pending demise. There is lots of backstage "reality," and above all fabulously stick-in-the-brain good music. Surprisingly effective vocals by Meryl Streep, Lily Tomlin, Virginia Madsen, Woody Harrelson, and John C. Reilly. Yes, they also act in the context of monologues and interweaving stories. (JG) Mann Beverly Center Cinema, Laemmle One Colorado Cinemas

Quinceanera

★★★ (R) Helmers Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland offer a slice of life in their Echo Park neighborhood in this fictional tale of 14-year-old Magdelana, daughter of a conservative preacher, who finds herself mysteriously pregnant shortly before her Quinceanera (15th birthday celebration). She takes refuge with her loving granduncle, and her troubled, gay cousin. This lovely and poignant film won both the Jury and Audience Awards at Sundance this year. (KV) ArcLight Cinemas Hollywood, Laemmle Playhouse 7, Lammlle Monica, Laemmle Town Center Theatre

A Scanner Darkly

★★★ (R) An almost-animated, pitch-black meditation on perception, paranoia and identity. Keanu Reeves stars as Bob Arctor, za drug-addicted undercover cop all but permanently ensconced in a second identity as "Fred" (created by a "scramble suit," a hologram of sorts that masks his identity) ordered to spy on his own alter ego and his friends. For viewers, it's tough to anchor feelings or a rooting interest in a mind-fried character with shifting identities, but he's all we have. Even if we don't quite connect emotionally, Bob/Fred's situation keeps us interested in his plight, wondering if he can stop himself from drowning. (AB) Mann Beverly Center Cinema, Laemmle One Colorado Cinemas, Academy 6

Scoop

★ 1/2 (PG-13) When Woody Allen's Match Point came out last winter, it was hailed by critics and audiences as a thrilling resurgence for a once-brilliant filmmaker whose output over the last ten years had veered from mildly amusing retreads like Small Time Crooks to embarrassing misfires like Anything Else. Unfortunately, in what may go down as the shortest comeback since Burt Reynolds squandered his Boogie Nights career boost, Allen's latest film, Scoop, is a dreary, dated, and depressing comedy that is an unfortunate return to his recent form. Deceased Joe Strombel (Ian McShane), formerly an ace investigative reporter for a top London newspaper, chats up a fellow spirit who claims that she was poisoned by her boss, the wealthy and politically connected playboy Peter Lyman (Hugh Jackman), because she suspected that he might be a fiend currently stalking British prostitutes. Eventually, his spirit makes contact with Sondra Pransky (Scarlett Johansson), an American journalism student spending the summer with friends in London, and he implores her to follow up on the lead. (PS) Five Star Theatres Los Feliz 3, ArcLight Cinemas Hollywood, Landmark Rialto Theatre, AMC Theatres Burbank, Landmark Westside Pavillion Cinemas

Shadow Boxer

★ (R) Mikey (Cuba Gooding Jr.) and Rose (Helen Mirren) are vicious cold-blooded contract killers. Rose is also a pedophile, although the movie isn't explicit about this. When we meet them they are lovers. Apparently Rose raised Mikey and then bedded him. In Shadowboxer, Gooding Jr. continues the descent he started with his role in Dirty, a movie so profane it exceeded any known bounds of propriety. Here, he stars in a film with enough depravity to offend virtually everybody. (TM) AMC Theatres Magic Johnson Theatre, Laemmle Fairfax Cinemas, Laemmle One Colorado Cinemas

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**MOVIE LISTINGS from p. 19**

**Shock to the System: A Donald Strachey Mystery Not Reviewed (R)**

Donald Strachey (Chad Allen) is the kind of no-funny-businness private eye to get actively suspicious when his client ends up dead. With the assistance of his straight edge husband Tim Callahan (Sebastian Spence), Strachey finds himself hurled into a world of "gay conversion therapy," headed by psychologist/priest Dr. Trevor Cornell (Michael Woods). Based on the Richard Stevenson's popular series, this film also stars veteran Morgan Fairchild in a standout role. (JC) Regent Theaters Showcase

**Strangers with Candy ★(R)**

Roughly four times the length of a normal episode, *Candy* unfortunately does not contain a similar multiple of laughs. The film is a smug and dreary slog through largely unfunny material that will completely bewilder newcomers while testing the patience of loyal fans of the show. However I will admit that the film does contain one bit that actually made me laugh as hard as anything else that I have seen this year: a gym class sequence featuring an activity more hazardous than even dodgeball. (PS) Laemmle Sunset 5 Theatre, Academy 6

**Superman Returns ★★ ★ (PG-13)**

Does the big screen still need a Superman? The answer is a resounding yes. It may take itself a little too seriously, and the love story tends to overwhelm the gee-whiz fun of it all, but *Superman Returns* is a very good movie— it's not

quite super, but it's definitely good. Director Bryan Singer's clever device to link to previous Superman films by incorporating John Williams' theme music, familiar dialogue, and unused footage of Marlon Brando will surely give longtime fans the chills. (SM) AMC Theatres Magic Johnson Theatre, Mann Glendale Exchange 10, Mann Beverly Center Cinema, AMC Theatres Burbank Town Center 6, Pacific's Sherman Oaks 5

**Water ★★ ★ 1/2 (PG-13)**

An unflinching look at the life of a widow in 1930's India. A widow, is left at a home for cast out widows where she is expected to spend the rest of her life. (JH) Mann Beverly Center Cinema

**Talladega Nights ★★ ★ 1/2 (PG-13)**

Please see our review on page 13. Laemmle Grande, University Village, ArcLight Cinemas Hollywood, AMC Theatres Magic Johnson Theatre, Mann Glendale Marketplace 4, Mann Glendale Exchange 10, Laemmle One Colorado Cinemas, AMC Loews Universal Studios and IMAX Theater, Pacific's Paseo 14, Pacific's Culver Stadium 12, AMC Theatres Burbank

**Who Killed the Electric Car? ★★ ★ 1/2 (PG)**

The killers of the electric car were so good—so efficient—most of us forgot it existed. But in Chris Paine's documentary, we focus our attention, not on the problem, but on the solution. If you were depressed by *Inconvenient Truth*, you'll be horrified by *Electric Car*. (SS) Laemmle Fairfax Cinemas, Laemmle One Colorado Cinemas, Landmark Nu-Wilshire

**X-Men: The Last Stand**

★★ 1/2 (PG) The third, and supposedly final installment hints at "X4." It's entertaining enough, and it's certainly far superior to some of the other recent superhero flicks to come flying off the Marvel Comics conveyor belt (especially 2004's *The Punisher* and 2005's *Elektra*). But the film lacks focus, the dialogue is weak and there are far too many underdeveloped characters, resulting in a franchise that ends on a relative whimper rather than the X-cellent bang that it deserved. (SM) Vine Theater

**You, Me and Dupree ★ 1/2 (PG-13)**

*You, Me, and Dupree* is a mediocre film that squanders the talent of its stars. The off-kilter humor that earned Joe and Anthony Russo Emmy Awards for *Arrested Development* is missing from *Dupree*, a formulaic romantic comedy highlighted by too few chuckle-inducing moments. Soon after their wedding, Carl (Matt Dillon) and Molly (Kate Hudson) take in *Dupree* (Owen Wilson) who has fallen on hard times. The first morning the newlyweds find *Dupree* sleeping nude on their plush leather couch. As *Dupree's* stay at the Peterson residence becomes longer and longer, efforts are doubled then redoubled to get him out. Wilson has special on-screen radiance that can earn him instant trust (see *The Life Aquatic* and *Bottle Rocket*). But without the constant gabbing of Vince Vaughn, Wilson's eclectic magnetism isn't enough to carry the show. (JH) Mann Glendale Exchange 10, Mann Beverly Center Cinema, AMC Loews Universal Studios and IMAX Theater

**QUINCEANERA from p. 17**

Latino image and made sketches of the others." I was recently talking to Larry Clark about *Wassup Rockers* where the same criticism was levied. Do you have any reactions to that criticism, other than it's just plain stupid?

**Jesse:** [Laughs.] It is just plain stupid. And I don't think anything was glorified in it. I think everything that was in there was very real. The two gay men, the gay couple that are in the movie, those guys, they're kind of depicted as pseudo-villainous and kind of preying upon this younger guy....

**Michael:** But *he* seduced them.

**Jesse:** Yeah! Yeah. We all seduced each other. It's not like Carlos didn't want to be there. Those guys are real. Those guys exist. It's characters like that that people don't want to see because they don't want other people to know that there are actually predatory guys out there like that, y'know what I'm saying? And then the Latino culture worry that there's a gay cholo or a teenage pregnancy, they don't want to see that either because that's too real. This movie is honest and real and it tells things how it really is and people kind of get scared of that.

**Michael:** I also thought it was an unfair assessment because the

Latino characters aren't by any means saintly—other than the *Tio* who is like a wonderful saint and the heart of this movie—but the character of the father is obviously a conflicted man. I loved the final reconciliation scene where he kept trying to make it a religious event. [Laughs.] That's a wonderfully-played scene. This is where I commend you as an actress, Emily, because it isn't like you had to drum these things over our head. You just said them like a kid would say them. "Dad, it wasn't that." I really liked that.

**Emily:** Thank you.

**Michael:** Sometimes you'll see actors and they're using tricks. They are so obviously *acting*. With you it seemed like these things were really happening to you. Can you talk a bit about how you developed the role?

**Emily:** It's so funny when people ask me that because I really wish I knew the answer to it. I really don't know anything I did different than I wouldn't do in my regular life. I related to the character on a lot of different levels so I don't feel like I had to act too much.

For more interviews and writing by Michael Guillén, go to: [www.TheEveningClass.blogspot.com](http://www.TheEveningClass.blogspot.com)

**TALLADEGA from p. 13**

At the same time, when *Talladega Nights* is funny, it is really funny. There moments throughout the film that caused me to laugh out loud. The quotes attributed to Eleanor Roosevelt and Colonel Sanders. Ricky's Big Red commercial. The look on Ricky's face when he finally realizes that his paralysis is psychological and not physical. The training techniques of the senior Bobby (though they would have been funnier if they had been left out of the trailers). The guests at Girard's garden party. The moment when Ricky compares his battle of wills with Girard to a certain Sean Connery film of some repute. These are all funny bits — I'm smiling at the memory of them even as I type these very words — and they are almost enough to make me recommend the film. However, there just aren't enough of them. Like most unsuccessful NASCAR drivers, *Talladega Nights* uses up all its energy and winds up running on fumes long before it gets to the finish line.

Peter Sobczynski writes for the *Liberty Suburban Chicago Newspapers* chain and on-line at [www.efilmcritic.com](http://www.efilmcritic.com). He can also be heard on the nationally syndicated *Mancow's Morning Madhouse* radio program. Comments, complaints, questions, threats and Milla Jovovich's phone number can be sent to him at [petersob@netzero.net](mailto:petersob@netzero.net).



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Register at [www.infolist.com](http://www.infolist.com) by **AUGUST 31st**

**FOR A CHANCE TO WIN:**

- IPOD Nano
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- \$50 Gift Certificate at Virgin Megastore!
- Final Draft Pro Software!
- 10 Free Script Copies
- \$1000 Gift Card at Bradford Portrait Studio!

## CASTING

### CASTING FEMALE ASIAN FOR INTERNET COMMERCIAL

Aveo Entertainment/Internet Commercial. Asian non-union female actor 40is/50is of age. Chinese or Japanese or Korean. Speaks language fluently. **PLEASE SUBMIT ASAP!** Auditions from 9:00am to 5:00pm on Tuesday, August 1st. Shooting on Tuesday, August 1st during the evening in Santa Monica, CA. The pay is \$65.00 for a couple hours of work. **TO SUBMIT:** email your headshot and resume to: [casting@aveoentertainment.com](mailto:casting@aveoentertainment.com)

### CASTING MAJOR SOFT DRINK WEBSISODE

Susan Johnston Casting is casting the following non-union roles for a major soft drink webisode: Male, Caucasian, mid to late 20's Average build, attractive-cool not geeky, goth, dorky, etc. Must be very passionate, very funny, unassuming. Fairly conservative. No piercings. No ponytails. Ashton Kutcher meets "Jim" from "The Office" Compensation: This is a **BUYOUT:** \$6,000.00 total monetary compensation, at \$500.00 for each of 12 webisodes. In addition to the buyout pay, transportation, lodging, meals, and \$50.00 a day per diem will be provided. Shoots in Dallas TX and Louisiana. Audition this Wednesday, August 2nd 2006 from 1-5pm in Hollywood, Callbacks Thursday, August 3rd. For detail submission info please go to [www.infolist.com](http://www.infolist.com) (It's free to register)

### PHYSICIAN WANTED TO HOST PRIME-TIME NETWORK SHOW

Producers are seeking a well-credentialed physician to host a prime-time show for a major network. This doctor must have a complete knowledge of internal medicine on a wide range of illnesses and a bedside manner that all of America will LOVE. A working knowledge of the most advanced and modern diagnostic techniques is a must. This show will focus on the importance of early detection, risk assessment and prevention of disease. Past TV experience not necessary. Please submit picture, curriculum vitae and tape if available to: [bryans@glassmanmedia.com](mailto:bryans@glassmanmedia.com) OR via **REGULAR MAIL:** Bryan Stinson 3800 Barham Blvd., Suite 403 Los Angeles, CA ! 90068 Physicians ONLY can contact Bryan at (323) 845-3011

### HOME MAKEOVER/RENOVATION SERIES WANTS TO HELP WITH YOUR HOME!

A new HGTV series is currently seeking young, energetic couples and families who have bitten off more than they could chew with a do-it-yourself project! We're here to rescue you from the project you started, but just couldn't finish! Your unfinished do-it-yourself project can range from landscaping, patios, ponds, fountains, and gazebos to doors, windows, stairs, floors, crown molding, and built-ins or any other unique project we can help you tackle and finish in 3 days. If you, or someone you know, owns a home in the greater Los Angeles area and started working on a project but got stuck, we want to hear from you! Please visit our website at [www.veryourhead.tv](http://www.veryourhead.tv) for more details and to apply online. Or Email a brief description of your home renovation dilemma to Annette at [alassen@lmnotv.com](mailto:alassen@lmnotv.com)

### CASTING HOST FOR GAME SHOW PILOT

New nationally syndicated, fun & high-energy pop-culture **GAME SHOW PILOT** is casting for a **HOST**. We are looking for a male or female in the age range of 20's-40's. Host must be high energy, have a great sense of humor, be quick on their feet and be comfortable dealing with contestants. Hosting and/or game show experience is a plus. This is a great opportunity. If picked up for series, over 100 nationally syndicated episodes will be produced. This is a non-union project. Must be based in Southern California. Only submissions with reels will be considered. Email your headshot, resume, and/or link to your reel to: [tinacasting789@yahoo.com](mailto:tinacasting789@yahoo.com) OR mail to: Tina Seiler Casting PO Box 2001 Toluca Lake, CA 91610

### CASTING FOR NATIONALLY SYNDICATED GAME SHOW HOST

New nationally syndicated fun & high-energy pop-culture game show is casting for a **HOST**. We are looking for a male/female in the age range of 20's-40's. Host must be high energy, have a great sense of humor, be quick on their feet and be comfortable dealing with contestants. If picked up, over 100 nationally syndicated episodes will be produced. Non-union project. Must be based in Southern California. Only Submissions with Reels will be considered. For detail submission info please go to [www.infolist.com](http://www.infolist.com) (It's free to register)

### CASTING FOR HISTORY CHANNEL DOCUMENTARY

Fantastic opportunity with national exposure for talented actors. JWM Productions is looking for on camera character talent to fill the following roles in a two-hour civil war documentary for the History Channel. Scenes will be shot during the month of September. The program will be shot in Virginia. The roles of Upson and Sherman are lead roles with longer shoot periods-- no more than two-three weeks. This documentary is non-union (SAG okay) and is being directed by Rick King (IMDB). This is a documentary, so the pay is low... however, we will also cover food and lodging. The roles:

**WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN** (Lead Role), 45 year-old Caucasian Male, Tall, Thin Build Red Hair including natural Facial Hair. Must Bear a Resemblance to the former general. Ability to ride a horse is a big plus. Heavy Speaking Role.

**THEODORE UPSON** (Civil War Soldier) Supporting Role-- Featured significantly throughout the program 20 year-old Caucasian Male

Thin Build, Must look Young, Longer hair a plus. Facial hair is also acceptable. The only absolute requirements for this role are thin and young. Heavy Speaking Role. Please send a headshot and resume to:

JWM Productions  
Att: Jessica Harrington  
6930 Carroll Ave, Suite 600  
Takoma Park, MD 20912

### FAMILIES WANTED FOR ABC'S SUPERNANNY

Had enough of the constant battle to get your children to eat, sleep and behave? You need the **SUPERNANNY!** ABC is currently looking for families with children (infant to teens) to take part in its hit television series featuring Jo Frost, one of the United Kingdom's top nannies. Using the expert techniques that have made ABC's **SUPERNANNY** a hit show and her parenting skills books/DVD's bestsellers, Jo Frost works with families to help with even the toughest infants, kids and teens and restore order to American households. In addition to regular American households, Super Nanny is also seeking **CELEBRITY FAMILIES** to feature on the show -- all parents, regardless of fame, have similar concerns, so feel free to forward this email to any celebrities you know!

**CONTACT SUPERNANNY** at: [www.abc.com/primetime/supernanny](http://www.abc.com/primetime/supernanny) 1-877-NANNYTIME OR [ahirsch@ricochettelevision.com](mailto:ahirsch@ricochettelevision.com)

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# ENTERTAINMENT TODAY

just email your request to [Classifieds@EntertainmentTodayOnline.com](mailto:Classifieds@EntertainmentTodayOnline.com)

# Astrological forecasts

by Lady Katsura and Suki Yaki



**WARNING:** This is a humor piece. Unlike other astrology columns, it has no scientific basis whatsoever.

## Capricorn (December 22 – January 20)

Okay, we can't promise you it's 100 percent safe, but we'd feel guilty advising you to stay shut up in your apartment another week now that your bad karma alert is only at yellow (moderate). So, yeah, we think it's probably somewhat safe to go outside again. But be sure to wear shoes that cover your toes, a hard hat, and one of those SARS masks wouldn't hurt if you still have yours.

## Aquarius (January 21 – February 18)

There are many ways to skin a cat and your cat has gone too far. She ate the diamonds off your lavender suede Manolo Blahniks, the Gucci blouse is in shreds, and the final straw: she peed on your Laura Ashley loveseat. So after you kill her, try skinning her head to tail and saving those cute little ears for your next halloween party. We're sure there are other ways to skin a cat, but we're getting grossed out thinking about it.

## Pisces (February 19- March 19)

There are some things that are significant enough to warrant praying to God. Having clean socks that match, while comforting, is not one of them. If you ask God for things that you really should be taking care of yourself, what do you expect Him to say when you need something really important like a green light an an intersection?

## Aries (March 20 – April 19)

We don't know when. We don't know how. We don't know where. But, sometime this week you are going to find your sunglasses. Stop looking and worrying — it's no use. They will just show up. That's how it goes.

## Taurus (April 20- May 20)

We know you're still smarting from those 13 rejections at Mountain Bar last Friday, but don't get your hair cut just yet. Our psychic sensors foresee an awesome casting call that requires a Jew fro. For once in your life your curly locks will actually get you somewhere besides naked in front of the mirror, whispering obscenities at your forefathers.

## Gemini (May 21 – June 20)

No, it's not true that that the people on TV can see you when you're naked. Only some of them can. Here's a list: Alex Trebek, Dr. Ruth, Chris Matthews, Joan Rivers, and the cast of *Everybody Loves Raymond*.

## Cancer (June 21 – July 20)

So what if your agent tells you an increase in cup size will double your callbacks? Please stay away from the knife. You are hot and you are proportionate. You can get famous without going all Tara Reid and looking like a freak show. Plus, we see promising guys in the future who put "petite" down as their preferred body type.

## Leo (July 21 – August 20)

Last time we looked, the best things in life were still free. So stop paying so much money to that rent-a-date service, especially since you're not even getting laid. If you really want a surefire way to get some action, go to Borders, pretend you're interested in dog calendars, and ask loud questions in a squeaky voice implying you can't find your own butt.

## Virgo (August 21 – September 20)

You have been really understanding about your boyfriend's "secret stash" of mags and videos, so subtly hidden under the sink in his bathroom. Many would say that your willingness to also view pornography is a hopeful sign. But you need to actually tell him that you know about his habit, rather than secretly indulging when he's not home.

## Libra (September 21 – October 22)

It's been six months. No girl should cause your life to suck this much. Eat a decent meal, watch *Fight Club*, take a shower (please), and go out. You won't find your soul mate this week, but check with us next week. In the mean time, just hook up with anyone who will have you and take pictures to email to a certain someone and make her jealous.

## Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)

Look, I know "manpris" are in and you think the lower portion of your shins go really well with your beat-up Converse. But, trust us, for this week at least, stick to pant-wear that extends all the way to the shoe, or stops at the knee. We foresee an accidental run-in with your girlfriend's conservative parents, and lets just say the old guard doesn't exactly understand the term "metrosexual."

## Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)

It's not a pretty thing to admit, but you have an issue with Hostess Ho-Ho's. And stop hitting the eject button every time you eat one! You can't have your cake and eat it two more times, at least not without a straw. Just eat them or don't eat them. Please! ☺

# SUDOKU

*The ultimate logic puzzle*

The object of the game is to fill in the blank cells with the numbers 1 to 9 such that:

- 1) Every row should have the numbers 1 - 9 (in any order).
- 2) Every column should have the numbers 1 - 9 (in any order).
- 3) Every 3x3 bolded square should have 1 - 9 (in any order).

2				5				
	5		3			1	9	
			9					4
		6	1			7	8	3
								6
	3			8				
			6	9				
			7		4	5		
		9		1		6		

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## SUDOKU CONTEST!

First 10 with correct answers will win Knitting Factory tickets and gift certificates.

Send correct answers to

Entertainment Today at

2325 W. Victory Blvd, Suite 5, Burbank, CA 91506-1226

# CORRECTION!

We apologize. Due to a typographical error, our Sudoku puzzle from last week was impossible to solve! At left is the way it was supposed to be.

We'll be more careful in the future.

—Lady K. and Suki Yaki

	2			7			9	
				3			6	
5		6			1	8		
	3	1	8			4		
	7			4				8
		7		6				
6			1		3		7	
								5

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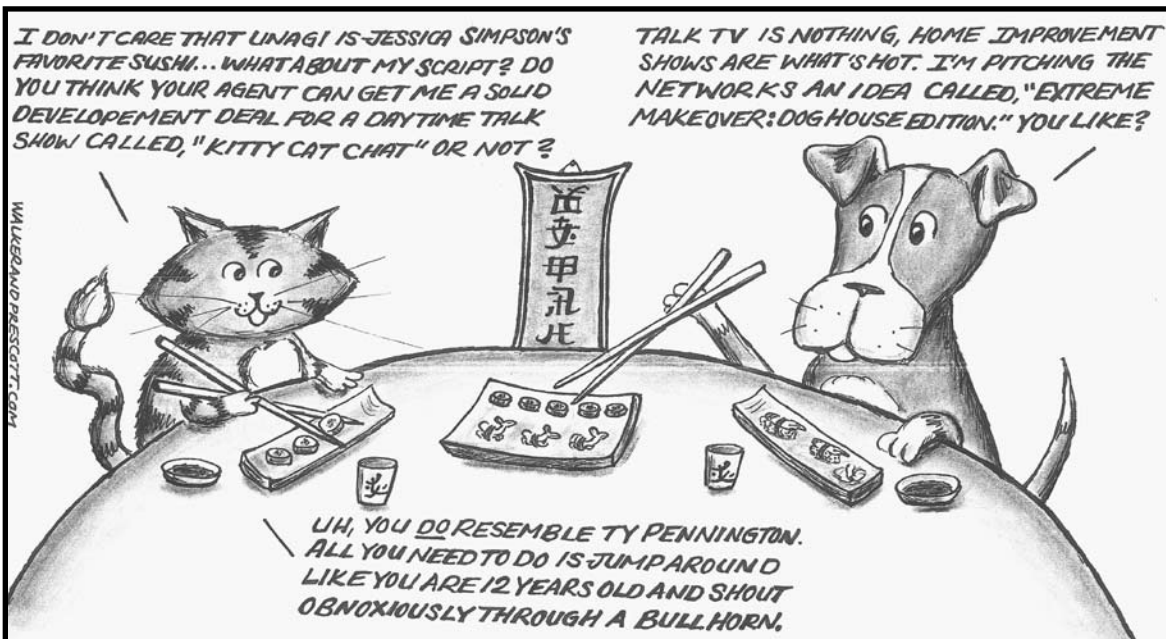
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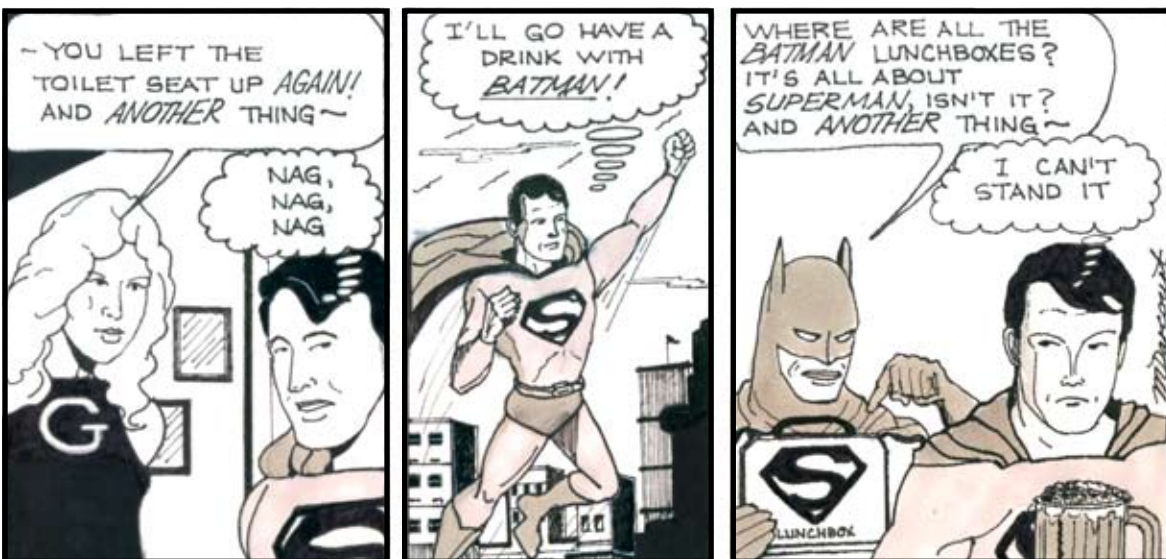
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ENTERTAINMENT SURVEY TODAY

We'd like to get to know you better!!! Please help us serve you by filling out this brief survey.

The first 30 surveys will receive complimentary tickets to upcoming shows at the Knitting Factory and gift certificates. Tickets and gift certificates are given out on a first come first serve basis.

Sex: (circle) Male Female

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ years old

Is this your first time reading Entertainment Today? (circle one) Yes No

If no, how long have you been a reader of Entertainment Today? \_\_\_\_\_ years

How often do you read Entertainment Today? (circle one) Every week Twice a month Once a month Almost Never

In this issue, which article did you find most interesting? \_\_\_\_\_

In this issue, which article did you find least interesting? \_\_\_\_\_

What section would you like to see added in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you pick up this issue: \_\_\_\_\_

What city do you live in: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your profession: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact information (to send movie tickets): Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please cut along the dotted line and mail your survey to Entertainment Today.

2325 West Victory Blvd, Suite 5  
Burbank, CA 91506  
or

email: Editorial@EntertainmentTodayOnline.com



# FLIX FACTORY

2325 West Victory Blvd, Suite 7, Burbank, CA 91506

Tel: (310) 820-7129 Fax: (818) 563-1258

www.flixfactory.com

## ONE STOP SHOP FOR INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS!



### SERVICES

#### PRE PRODUCTION

- Consultation
- Coordination



#### PRODUCTION

- DVX-100A w/ Tripod (\$200/day~)
- Lights with light stand (\$20/day~)

#### POST PRODUCTION

- Editing (\$35/hr~)
- DVD Authoring (\$50/tape~)
- Digibeta On-line edit
- Compositing



#### SOUND SERVICES

- Location Sound (\$275/day~)
- Sound Editing (\$35/hr~)
- Dialogue Editing (\$35/hr~)
- Sound Design (\$50/hr~)
- Foley (\$75/hr~)
- ADR Studio (\$150/hr~)
- Sound Mixing (\$50/hr~)



### FACILITIES/EQUIPMENT

#### CAMERA

- Panasonic DVX-100a
- Tripod
- 2 XL Batteries

#### LIGHTS

- 1000w Lights
- 650w Lights
- 300w Lights

#### LOCATION SOUND

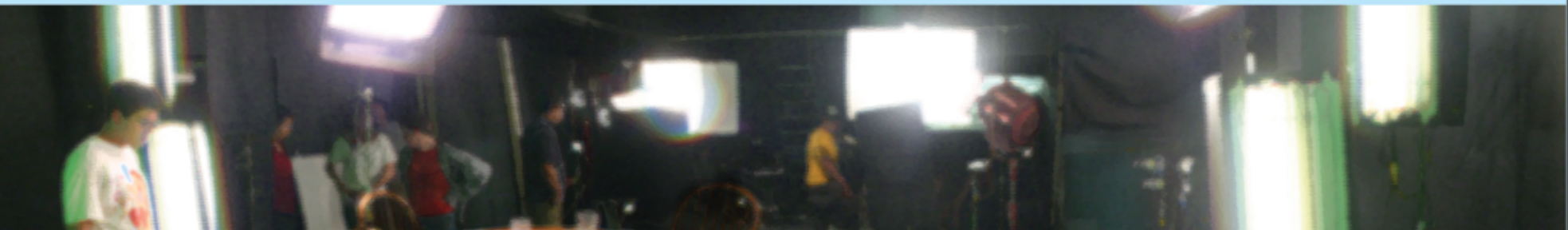
- (2) Shotgun mics
- FOSTEX Memory Recorder
- TASCAM Portable DAT Recorder
- (4) Wireless Lav Mic Kit
- 8ch Mixer
- 300 ft. XLR Cables
- Portable Sound Cart

#### POST PRODUCTION

- Apple Final Cut Studio
- Apple DVD Studio Pro
- Adobe Premiere Pro
- Adobe AfterEffects
- Eyeon Digital Fusion
- Photoshop/Illustrator
- DV, DVCAM, Digibeta

#### POST SOUND

- ProTools
- ADR Studio
- Waves Gold Bundle



### OUR LATEST PROJECT



## ASIAN STORIES (BOOK 3)

Asian Stories (Book 3) is Flix Factory's first feature film, shot on super 16mm film. We started from pre-production, production and completed post-production in our in-house facility.

www.AsianStoriesMovie.com

#### FLIX FACTORY

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