

Cambridge Movie News

Issue #1

Free!

02/01/01

Welcome to the First Issue!

Letter from the Editor

As the headline says, welcome to the first issue of the Cambridge Movie News. I hope that you'll find what the stories and articles inside to be useful and entertaining.

Each issue will have the list of upcoming movies (as you can see right next to this letter). Inside you will find reviews of movies, dvds as well as films on the Internet. We will also have articles describing everything from DVD qualities to the history of various film series. At the end of each issue we have the Negative Clippings, a small column describing something interesting or amusing.

If you would like to respond to any of these articles, send a submission or would just like to send a note, feel free to write to:

Cambridge Movie News
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Or you may email me at Theseus@linnaean.org.

All of the articles and reviews in this issue were written or compiled by me, but I hope to increase the staff shortly. I am especially looking for Columnists, so if you can write on a particular subject at length (at least 500 words every month) then please drop me a line. I'm willing to have a column about any subject (almost).

Until next issue, thanks for reading. I'll be over at the wrap party.
Chris DeKalb

February Releases:

Theaters:

02/02

Say it Isn't So
Valentine
Head Over Heals

02/09

Saving Silverman
Hannibal

02/16

Recess: School's Out
Sweet November
Down to Earth

02/23

Monkeybone
3,000 Miles to Graceland
Original Sin

Home Video:

(Both VHS and DVD)

02/06

Dr. T and the Women
The Digimon Movie

02/13

Bring it On
Get Carter
Bless the Child
Urban Legend II
Whipped
Woman on Top

02/20

Kings of Comedy
The Watcher
Blair Witch II
Highlander: Endgame
Beautiful

02/27

Lost Souls
Contender
Lady and the Tramp II

"I've been alive for four and a half centuries, and I cannot die."

"Well, everyone has got their problems"

— Highlander (1986)

Cambridge Movie News is published by Chris DeKalb. All materials are copyrighted © 2001. Any feedback or submissions are appreciated and may be sent to Cambridge Movie News, C/O Chris DeKalb, 16 Linnaean St. Cambridge, MA, 02138. Or you may email me at theseus@linnaean.org. Thanks for reading!

The New year in Film, Sundance Movies

2001 in Film

This year has a lot of upcoming events to entertain movie-goers, as well as home viewers. Here's a list of some of the upcoming items:

Cinemas

This should be an interesting year in the Theaters.

In April is **Josie and the Pussycats**, based off on the old Saturday morning cartoon.

In May we have a ton of blockbusters and sequels. Watch for **Pearl Harbor**, **The Mummy Returns** and the animated **Shrek!** are all released this month.

In June you'll be able to see **Dr. Dolittle 2**, along with the game-based **Tomb Raider**. **House of 1000 Corpses** is also scheduled, after being delayed from last year.

Later in the summer the theaters will be showing **Jurassic Park III**, another computer game turned into a movie **Final Fantasy**. Also on the schedules is **Scary Movie II**.

At the end of 2001 we'll see **Lord of the Rings**, which has had an immense amount of attention from fans and on the Net.

DVDs

At the Video Software Association Show this year several releases were talked about. What can we look forward to?

The **Superman** series will finally be coming out. **Superman I** will be a two disc set, with tons of extras. The other movies will be released as single discs, but the entire series will be available in a boxed set.

In March **Blair Witch 2: Book of Shadows** is com-

ing out. It's unique in that one side will be the movie as a normal DVD, but on the opposite side will be the soundtrack in normal CD format. That side will play in any CD player.

In May we might get to see **Close Encounters of the Third Kind** released as a double disc release, again with extras. That same month we will also see **Big Trouble In Little China**.

Late this year we may even see **Star Wars Episode I** on Dvd. Unfortunately the rest of the Star Wars Series will still be VHS only.

From TV we will be getting another season of both **X-Files** (season 3 and 4), **Sex and the City** (season 2) and **The Sopranos** (season 2). Also coming out on DVD will be episodes of the old **Transformers** and **GI Joe** cartoon series. The **Simpsons** will also start being released on DVD.

Sundance Internet festival

Playing online from January 18th to February 28th the Sundance Film festival is showing 18 short films for free over the internet. (Registration is required) The site is at <http://www.sundanceonlinefilmfestival.org>.

The films are mostly animated, and range from the surreal to adventure to horror.

Freeware, for instance, has the feel of a computer game intro, with computerized characters breaking into a fortified tower to rescue a sentient program. Another short, **Gone Bad**, is an effective horror film about a priest holding off against a plague of zombies.

The festival also has live action films, and also some interactive ones, including **The New Arrival**, which allows you to change where the camera points as you experience the arrival of a new patient in a nursing home.

“So you're from outer space?”
“No, I'm from Iowa. I only work in outer space.”
 —Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home

Reviews

Cinema

This is the place for reviewing movies that are either still in the theaters, or have just recently left them (ie, check for them on Pay-per-view or the movie channels soon)

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon

Martial Arts [NR]

An amazing blend of fighting, romance and social intrigue, this is an incredible film. It's wire-fu, with the martial artists flying and doing stunts that are bordering on insane. (and impossible in real life of course)

The story follows several characters, a man who wants to get rid of a famous sword that seems to only bring him battle and blood, a woman who loves him but can't have him and a young woman who has a terrible case of hero worship for the fighters.

Surprisingly enough, this movie features several major fights, a great deal of character introspection plus a lengthy flashback scene. And yet it still keeps the pace going quickly.

The characters are interesting and the dialogue is witty.

And thank goodness they didn't dub it. Watching good actors with bad voices could have easily driven down the quality of the film.

Go see this one.

Dungeons and Dragons

Fantasy [PG-13]

Well, it could have been worse. That's about all you can say about this film. It suffers from a weak plot and several actors either uncaring about their roles (Thora Birch) or over-acting to an extreme (Jeremy Irons)

The story is that in a magic-controlled city the current empress wants to turn the city into a class-

less state where "everybody is free and equal". The main magic user and champion of the guard begin to move against her, causing her eventual break with the ruling council of the city. The big problem, however, is that the empress has a magical rod that can control gold dragons. The evil wizard seeks a second rod, which can control red dragons.

(although in the game these two types of dragons are quite different, they look exactly the same on screen except for color)

Meanwhile, two thieves have broken into the magic academy and while looking around for something to steal accidentally witness the murder of a major wizard, and get sucked along while the wizard's apprentice makes her escape. The thieves and apprentice begin looking for the magical rod. If they can get it first, the empress can be saved.

Thus begins a typical "get to the object" first adventure with the good guys (the thieves) trying to remain one step ahead of the bad guys (the champion of the guard).

Eventually the thieves do return with the rod, but the evil wizard manages to get it from them. This leads to a climatic battle between wizard council (firing fireballs in a decent special effects scene) at the Empress who is charging the city with her horde of dragons.

The final scene does have an effective dragon vs. dragon fight scene, but it ends very predictably.

All in all if you can suffer the terrible acting this movie is worth renting. The effects are decent and there are a few scenes that are a lot of fun. So go see it when you have some time to kill, and without high expectations.

Dracula 2000

Horror [R]

Wes Craven has taken the Dracula story and placed it in modern day. The story is familiar to any horror

"So this is planet Houston?"
—Superman II (1982)

More Reviews

fan: Dracula wakes up in today's time, begins eating people, a vampire hunter goes out to find him, young and attractive people get pulled in as vampires or vampire hunters and it all ends with a big fight at the end. Did I miss anything?

This film has Van Helsing as an antiques dealer who is keeping Dracula trapped inside a metal coffin hidden deep in a vault. Helsing captured him a hundred years ago, but has been unable to truly kill him. Helsing has also been using Dracula's blood to keep himself alive, using the vampire's filtered blood as a sort of immunity serum.

The problem with having a ton of security and a huge vault is that someone always notices, and believes there is actually treasure in there. The film begins with thieves breaking into the vault and accidentally releasing the vampire.

There is another factor, however. While Helsing was living off of Dracula's blood, he fell in love and had a daughter. This daughter has vampiric blood, and Dracula senses her as a fellow soul. (the mother has passed away by this point). So, Dracula heads off to New Orleans to find his daughter, with Helsing and his young assistant in hot pursuit.

While in New Orleans the body count rises as Dracula and his wives (by this point he's transformed three women into vampires) and minions go up against Helsing and his assistant. The fights scenes are actually done pretty well, if nothing really original.

All in all this is a decent movie, not scary in the least but an interesting story and fun to watch. Jeri Ryan is in it, but is given a horrible role and is terrible as

she's obviously only in there for her body. It seems that at least she had a sense of humor, with a couple of lines that are amusingly said by her. ("Ever want to do it with a TV star?" she asks)

Watch this film if you're interested in seeing a vampire film, but don't be expecting anything really amazing.

DVD

A review section for DVDs, including the extras and other odds and ends on that disc. We'll be covering both new releases and older titles.

Toy Story I and II

Comedy [G]

Disney has released it's Pixar animated films in a DVD 2-pack (a three disc set is also available). The films are great, involving the adventures of a cowboy doll (voiced by Tom Hanks) and a space ranger action figure (voiced by Tim Allen) as well as several other young boy's toys.

The DVD quality allows the films to be seen with an amazing clarity and sound. The extras are handled nicely as well. Options for letterboxed or widescreen on both disks, two shorts are included, all the outtakes and language options.

There is one weird omission, however. The trailers for the movies are not included. This is possibly the only movie DVD released in the last year without them.

This pack is a little more expensive then your usual release, as it does have two films in it, but it is definitely worth buying.

"What do you mean "bad"?"

"Try to imagine all life as you know it stopping instantaneously and every molecule in your body exploding at the speed of light."

— Ghostbusters (1984)

And More Reviews

Hollow Man

Horror [R]

Basically this is Invisible Man 2000. A group of scientists are working on a way to turn people invisible. It works, but bringing people back is very difficult and also has nasty affects on the sanity of whomever is invisible.

The films highlights are the special effects. The transformation sequences are very detailed, with the person or animal disappearing system by system (circulatory first, then muscular, finally skeletal).

And there are also the usual invisible man effects, such as items moving by themselves and sudden footprints appearing in sand or puddles.

The story itself is pretty weak, and the characters don't have much depth. It also has a final fight sequence while the Invisible man goes after his fellow scientists that is too long, with the invisible man apparently much stronger and tougher than a normal human. (surviving flame, explosions and able to beat up anybody he wants too).

The DVD is loaded with extras. It has the trailer, multiple languages, documentary, several commentary tracks and deleted scenes.

It's worth renting, or possibly having in the collection but definitely not worth fighting over.

VHS

This is for reviews of tapes and movies available for VCRs, and either unavailable on DVD or we just didn't feel like reviewing that version.

Hollow Point

Action [R]

An older film (1995) but a surprisingly large amount

of fun. This is a cops and bad guys action movie with Tia Carrere, John Lithgow and Donald Sutherland playing a goofy assassin.

The plot goes along the efforts of Lithgow trying to organize a major movement of illegally gained money and trying to keep three separate mafias (Russian, Chinese and Italian) working together. He has both a DEA agent (Thomas Griffith) and a FBI agent (Carrere) going after him. Plus Sutherland also working against him after Lithgow double-crossed him.

This isn't the movie for you if you like things like complex plots, deep characters or totally believable dialogue. But if you want to see lots of explosions and people doing heroically stupid things then this is the movie for you.

Available on Vidmark home video.

Internet

This is the place for reviews of Internet download movies. This issue I'll talk about one that has made a rather large splash in the press.

George Lucas In Love (www.mediatrip.com)

Spoof [NR]

A seven minute spoof of Shakespeare in Love, only this talks about George Lucas, the creator of Star Wars. This is a truly funny short film, with plenty of references to the Star Wars films, along with a few other films as well.

The acting is fine and it was even filmed on location for a few scenes. It's available for free at Mediatrip.com and it is also on VHS and DVD (the DVD also has three other short films on it..well worth the price)

“Stop Sir, I beseech you. I apologize for calling your wife a bloated warthog.. hehe..and I bid you good day.”

—Highlander (1986)

Next Issue, Submissions

Next Issue

Next issue we have reviews galore for your reading enjoyment. Along with that an article comparing the benefits of owning movies on Videotape and those of owning movies on DVD. (both have their good and bad sides)

Submit something!

Despite my glorious (and humble) writing skills I could use some help with this publication. Do you like Movies? Do you have more a pile of videotapes or DVDs higher than most forms of livestock? Can you quote the entire prologue to Highlander or Army of Darkness?

If you can say yes to any of those then you're more than qualified to write for us. If you answered no to any of these questions then go ahead and write anyways. You'll be quoting movies in no time.

We're looking for reviews of any movie or film-related material. Movies in the theaters, on tape or on DVD are all perfectly acceptable. The newest short on Atom Films or iFilms.com are also begging to be talked about. Reviews can be of any length, although please let it be more than two words. (ie, more than "it's good")

Articles are always appreciated as well. This can be anything, from technical information on filming, to an in-depth history of Romances in American Film. Have fun, use your imagination. Any articles should be long enough to fill a page. (at least 500 words) If you're an Artist I'm always looking for your work as well. I can barely draw a stick figure, so any help would be greatly appreciated. Art can be submitted on disk or paper. Black and white is requested, but not required. (although at the moment I do not do any color printing)

Right now this is a free zine, so no payments are offered. Other than the nice warm fuzzy feeling that you'll get to see your name in print.

Send any submissions to:

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Or email:

Theseus@linnaean.org

The Negative Clippings

The following movies have all been discussed at one point or another. Will they ever make it out of the rumor mill?

- The Lost Girls (Lost Boys II)
- Predator vs. Aliens
- Jason vs. Freddy
- Neuromancer