

Issue #10

Free!

Cambridge

Movie

News

March

2002

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Coming Attractions

AWARDS

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Everything a Good Movie Buff Needs!

Letter from the Editor

Greetings Movie Fans!

It is March, time for the Oscars and the big kick-off of movies. It's going to be a busy month, but luckily we're here to help guide you through.

CMN on TV!

Yes, It's true. All this month you can see me on *A Time To Review*, a movie review program hosted by Dan Berman. He was kind enough to invite me on as a guest, and the show will be shown throughout March.

The show is on Brookline Cable Access (www.batv.org) at the following times:

Mondays at 10:30pm.

Tuesdays at 12 noon.

Wednesdays at 5pm.

Thursdays at 7:30pm.

Fridays at 9:30am.

So sit back and watch me making various Oscar predictions and discussing movies in general.

Lord of the Rings Tidbits

Okay Hobbit fans, remember the following dates: March 22nd, August and November. On March 22nd a three-minute preview for the second movie will be added to the prints playing in theaters.

Current plans have August as the DVD release for *Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring*. Keep in mind, however a Special Edition is scheduled for November.

Disney's Being Greedy Again

Last month was the theatrical release of *Return to Neverland*, the Peter Pan Sequel. It did well enough that Disney will be producing a huge amount of sequels to other Disney Classics.

I, for one, am not entirely against the idea of doing sequels. Sometimes they can be quite good. The problem is that the vast majority does tend to be just a re-hash of the previous film and some can be truly terrible.

Disney is not inspiring a lot of hope for former.. the sequels are going to be produced by the TV animation unit. These are the ones who put out the direct-to-video fare. They are fine animators, but the unit has significantly less funding and talent than the Film animation unit.

We may very well see films coming out that will amuse only 10-year olds and the accounting dept. of Disney. Everyone else, including fans of the original classics will probably be thoroughly revolted.

The truly sad part is that it doesn't have to be this way. *Toy Story II* was originally going to be a direct-to-video sequel as well, but they changed their minds and gave it the full treatment it deserved.

We'll see if Disney decides to go for quality or quantity in the future. In the meantime, expect sequels to *Cinderella*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Tarzan* and two for *Mulan*.

The Trailer: Reign of Fire

Plot: Fire-breathing dragons have awakened, destroying most of civilization. Now a British fire-fighter and an American militia leader must destroy the queen before the end of mankind.

Probable Release Date: July 2002

Coming Attractions

March is here, And what will you go during the beginning of the Spring? Here are a few ideas: As always release dates are subject to change at the last minute.

★ CMN Recommends
 ●* CMN Lack of Excellence Award

Theater

3/1

We Were Soldiers
 40 Days and 40 Nights

3/8

The Time Machine
 All About the Benjamins

3/15

Ice Age
 Resident Evil
 Showtime

3/22

Blade II
 Stolen Summer ★
 ET 20th Anniversary Edition
 Sorority Boys ●*
 Van Wilder

3/29

Panic Room
 Death to Smoochy
 The Rookie
 Clockstoppers

Video

3/5

The One
 AI
 The Last Castle

3/12

Sexy Beast
 Zoolander
 Heist
 Joy Ride

3/19

Training Day
 2001: A Space Travesty
 Donnie Darko
 Wilde
 Riding in Cars with Boys

3/26

K-PAX
 Life as a House
 Original Sin
 Our Lady of the Assassins

DVD

3/5

The One
 AI
 Say Anything ★
 The Last Castle
 Split Second
 SuperBowl XXXVI

(Continued on page 12)

"Why don't you put a sign on your chest that says 'victim'? Come on, use your brains for a second. David and Janet haven't made it back yet."

"They've been gone ten minutes and they can take care of themselves."

"Oh, sure, I'd call a penlight enough protection against anything."

There's Nothing Out There (1991)

The Reviews de Cinema

Sitting around and watching movies. It's a tough job, but someone has to do it. Luckily my staff and I subject ourselves to this horrible task every month in order to tell you what to see, what to avoid and what to sue over.

Disagree with something you see here? Write a CounterReview! Information on CounterReviews are at the bottom of this section.

Theatrical

Queen of the Damned

Horror [R]

The sequel to *Interview With The Vampire*, this is a decent vampire movie.

It's by no means great... but it has plenty to offer if you are looking for some fun.

The mood of this movie is different than the previous one, thanks in large part to the time difference.

Before most of the movie dealt with France in the 17-1800s. It had lots of costumes and European classes. In *Damned* we see modern day rock in London and the US.

Basically it has taken the Gothic and turned it into Goth.

There are plenty of rockers, young people in black and wannabe vampires around as the Lestat announces himself to

the world as a vampire rock star. MTV calls it a stunt, the fans eat it all up and vampires that had lived in the shadows get very, very angry. And they want to stop him from spilling their secrets.. permanently.

But there are other forces at work. Akasha, the oldest vampire has been awakened by the music as well, and is moving to reclaim her old empire. This is not good for humanity, as she was the most ruthless and bloodthirsty of all vampires. She also wants Lestat as her consort.

This leads to struggles between the vampiric elders, Lestat and Akasha. It is the moving of ancient powers in Anne Rice's tradition. Unfortunately it doesn't hold up against the original *Interview*.

There is a lot more action in this film, and it holds up a hectic place. The only problem is that because of the pace it's keeping it tends to jump from topic to topic quickly. This is unfortunate, as more background on some of the other characters would have given the scenes better dramatic effect. If you're an Anne Rice fan you'll have fun picking out the various characters from the books, but you don't have to have read any of them to see the film.

So if you're in the mood for a slightly silly, but interesting vampire film go check it out. It's worth matinee price.



(Continued on page 5)

"I need to talk to you. Everytime I call you're either taking a bath, washing your hair or you're out of the country. That was a good one, by the way."
Can't Buy Me Love (1987)

(Continued from page 4)

Monster's Ball

Drama [R]

A remarkable movie, *Monster's Ball* shows how people can change and solve their problems despite everything being against them.

A white man falls in love with a black woman in the South. At best a difficult proposition. But it gets worse...he has a very racist elderly father living with him, and his own thoughts about black people aren't too great. Not only that, he's a prison guard who has just worked on her husband's execution.

Basically the movie throws almost everything it can at the relationship without slipping into any cinematic clichés.

The two characters are not perfect, especially at the start of the movie. Hank (played by Billy Bob Thornton) is a father who is racist, violent and a horrible father. He is constantly in conflict with his own feelings and those of his father. Most of these he takes out on his son.

Leticia (Halle Berry) is a desperately poor woman who is trying to struggle to find any sort of happiness. She deals with her stress through alcohol and takes out stress on her son.

Needless to say neither is a perfect parent.

But through a series of encounters the two get to know each other...and fall in love. This is where the movie shines, as Hank and Leticia fall for one another they slowly begin to mend their ways. Of course neither character becomes perfect, but the movie goes out of its way to show how they are improving without being too blunt.

The movie is helped considerably by strong acting on all sides. Its hard to develop feelings for imperfect people, but the actors manage it.

There are a few weak spots. The black husband is shown very stoically, and is not seen as a criminal at all. His crimes are barely mentioned early on in the film.

Monster's Ball is a very well done drama and should

be seen. It is dark, and the ending probably will not sit well with everyone...but it's definitely worth your time.

Rollerball

Science Fiction/Action [PG-13]

Possibly the most amazing thing about this film was it's publicity. Not the trailer or the posters or anything..but the amazing amount of very bad buzz the film had. Several pre-release reviews were scathing, and even the comments from the actors were worrisome (Rebecca Romijn-Stamos was quoted as saying the film had been recut to make it more action instead of brainy..oy..)

With that much negativity coming out before it, did it really herald a storm of badness?

Well..yes, actually it did. *Rollerball* is not a good movie. It is by no means the worst film I've ever seen, and there are parts of it that are fun and worth watching. But the movie as a whole is disappointing and there are parts that really make you squirm.

The plot involves a Texas boy-next-door type who gets promoted into a sport called *Rollerball*. It's immensely popular in third-world countries (especially former Soviet republics) and has basically taken over the economies. The government, the cops, the media, the business all revolve around this sport and it's controllers.

The sport is a brutal roller-derby type, and the managers all monitor the ratings constantly. But when the ratings dip they decide to stage a few accidents and ramp up the violence. And if anyone tries to point this out or struggle against this they are blackmailed, bought or simply disappear.

As I said, there are a few good things about the film. Some of the scenes are actually exciting, including a good lounge scene at the beginning. Also the subplot of the countries trying being controlled by the *Rollerball* corporation could have been very interesting if it had been given a little better

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*"This is a strange love affair."
"What's strange about it?"
"The fact that you don't love me."
Notorious (1946)*

Reviews, continued

(Continued from page 5)

handling. More conversations between the players and the public would have been nice to help that along. And with the notable lack of any American or European scenes, the film does try to bring a very international look to the game, with announcers broadcasting in multiple languages and players from all over the world.

Those were the good things. Now, the bad things. Ready?

Every actual Rollerball match has some serious problems. It's very difficult to understand the game rules, and the movie makes one tiny attempt to do so and then never tries again. The shots are all very hectic and thrown together at just the right speed that you don't know what the heck is going on. This also cuts into the main thrust of the film, in that the game is getting too dangerous. Almost all the scenes shown are of players beating the stuffing out of each other...and this is supposed to be in the "normal" games! So when they start beating each other up in the later, corrupted games it really doesn't look any different.

The costumes are ridiculous. That's all that needs to be touched on there.

The acting is poor with several characters being flat. Chris Klein and LL Cool J have very little to work with in their characters, and Rebecca Ramon-Stamos tries harder, but here character is badly mis-used in the last scene. Naveen Andrews does do a decent job as the plotting Corporate assistant, but the character barely has any screen-time.

The writing isn't the only culprit here either. The director made some very strange choices. A glaring example is a night-scene that is filmed entirely in IR-night goggle sights. Why? None of the characters have them, and it doesn't show any more detail than

what a night scene usually does. In fact the green tint forcibly reminds the audience that they are watching a film.

Well, with all of that being said is there any point in seeing this film?

Definitely not in the theaters, not even the second-run places. The DVD may be watchable, as they will probably release the Unrated Director's cut, where they can put back in the cut scenes and while the movie will still be bad, at least it will be watchable.

Super Troopers

Comedy [PG-13]

Review by Andrew Fersch

Movie reviews are something very interesting. You can look in the Boston Globe or Entertainment Weekly and read two reviews which are likely to sound

exactly the same saying that some new movie is bad, lacks humor or just falls short of expectations. And then read further on that the movie of the year for that magazine was *Pearl Harbor*. Add *Super Troopers* to the "Top Ten Worst" movie lists of these moronic magazines. Broken Lizard, the comedy group who wrote 'Super Troopers', started out at Colgate University and proceeded on to travel throughout the country performing live before they wrote this movie.

It's a comedy of old, with an air of 80's style but with some 90's humor snuck in (in the form of Taliban jokes and drug references). This movie reminds us that there is no need for 'gross out' humor for a movie to be truly funny, while at the same time showing us that in certain cases it can add much needed comedy relief. So if you think *Freddy Got Fingered* was funny, I would recommend

(Continued on page 7)

"If you think that Mick Jagger will still be doing the whole rock star thing at age fifty, well, then, you are sorely, sorely mistaken"
Almost Famous (2000)

Reviews

(Continued from page 6)

reevaluating your idea of comedy and go see this movie!

DVD

Requiem For A Dream

Drama [NR]

This is probably the best movie you will never watch twice. It has great acting, music and a highly stylistic editing style. It is also incredibly dark... The plot revolves around Harry, his best friend, girlfriend and mother. All of them are using drugs for various reasons: to escape reality, to lose weight, selling it to make money.

At the beginning everything works out well. His mom loses 25 pounds in a month, He and his friends get plenty of money succeed with their personal lives. But just like getting high, the loftiness doesn't last and soon they are going down. And when their lives start going down the director doesn't pull any punches. They go straight to their own personal hells.

Just as they're falling the editing begins to speed up, the music more crazy until the end of the film where the images punch you over and over. It is brutal and painful to watch, but incredibly done and very powerful.

The DVD is of the unrated version of the film (an R-rated film was released for Blockbuster and similar chains) so it gives all of the graphicness. It also comes with quite a few extras. We the trailers, making of documentaries, cast & crew info and production notes. It also has two commentator tracks, one from the director and one from the director of photography. Both are interesting and talk a lot about both the production and the story of the film.

The menu for the DVD features is clever, but a little confusing at first. The entire thing is set-up as a grainy infomercial. With the various menus being surrounded by "Order Now!" and "As Seen on TV" style blurbs. (thankfully the graininess does not continue into the film). So when you put in the disc and the ad for "Juice Power" comes up don't worry.. it's supposed to be there.

This movie is well worth seeing..and if you're a collector of powerful films or DVDs you should definitely pick it up. If you just want to see a good film, then renting is the way to go.

Video

Pootie Tang

Comedy [PG-13]

Review by Andrew Fersch

Ever head of a comedy about a gibberish speaking, faux super hero, community leader with a magic belt and a way with the ladies? Now you have. This comedy, the brainchild of Chris Rock, is about a man named Pootie Tang whose life is dedicated to fighting Big Business and stopping them from corrupting the youth. There is a very clear reason this movie is funny, it is ridiculous. The movie takes Blacksploitation and mixes it with a Chris Rock standup special, while adding some of the funniest fight scenes ever second only to *Drunken Masters*. This movie is wonderful not only because of the simple humor and clever nuances, but because of the story it is telling, the classic little guy fighting the big guy. This is definitely some of Rock's less offensive and more worthwhile material.

(Continued on page 8)

"There's the bathroom, take off your clothes."

"Are we planning the same sort of crime?"

How to Steal a Million (1966)

Reviews

(Continued from page 7)

Internet

A Clean Break (www.atomfilms.com)

Romantic Comedy [NR]

A young couple is going through a rough time, the woman has asked for "time and space" and the guy agreed..and moved out. He hasn't heard from her in two weeks and wants to get his stuff.

Now normally you just go back and either ask for it back or use the front door. But where would the fun of that be? Our hero, the boyfriend, decides to sneak in through a window while she's away. Of course finding his stuff, and not getting distracted by romantic memories, proves to be harder than he expected.

Most of the humor here is slapstick, and some of it is pretty funny. But for the most part this film doesn't have any depth to it, and it goes through the paces.

The ending is also predictable.

Watch it if you want some quick laughs, but not one to go running to get.

Beware the Hot Dog People

(www.undergroundfilm.com)

Horror/Comedy/Musical [NR]

You should be a little afraid of this movie just because of the name...and the film proves to be even stranger. It's ultra-low budget, black and white, and the special effects are literally scratches or dyes on the film.

Now I will describe some of the plot and you will instantly know one of two things:

1. This is the scariest thing you've ever heard of or
2. It must be seen immediately and often.

It's just one of those things.

The plot concerns a man driving down the road (none of the characters actually have names..they're actually listed as "man with hot dogs" and such in the credits) who has to deal with a strange man standing in his way. The man barks and growls, repeatedly pointing two hot dogs at him. Since the hot dog guy won't get out of the way the driver gets out to basically beat him up.

Alas, Mr. Hot Dog has other ideas, he touches the hot dogs to the driver's forehead and takes over his brain. (just wait..it gets better..)

And then when our hapless driver is under control of the hot dogs, what does the crazy guy make him do? Dance! And dance badly!

The driver does his best to do various Michael Jackson and Saturday Night Fever dance moves as the Hot Dog man laughs and parades him around. The movie gets stranger from there, including the appearance of something called the "Trashcan Monster".

This is just one of those films that you're going to think it's utterly cool, or it's going to give you a migraine. Possibly one of the most disturbing things is that it turns out the film was actually sponsored by a local calzone place. Why calzone places are afraid of hot dogs has not been explained.

I leave the choice of the Hot Dog People to you. Choose wisely.

CounterReview

Disagree with any of the reviews here? Wish to point out something that was missed? Then write a response and send it in! It will get it's own spiffy "CounterReview" banner and everything when it is printed.

Send your CounterReviews to the Editor at cdkboston@earthlink.net

"You know, this kind of behavior could qualify as sexual harassment."

"And what's the penalty for that?"

"Some day, you'll have to make good on your innuendos."

GoldenEye (1995)

AWARDS

The Oscars

The most prestigious of the awards, the Oscars were announced Feb. 12th and the winners will be announced on March 24th.

Best Picture

A Beautiful Mind
 Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring
 Moulin Rouge
 In the Bedroom
 Gosford Park

Best Actor

Russell Crowe, A Beautiful Mind
 Sean Penn, I am Sam
 Will Smith, Ali
 Denzel Washington, Training Day
 Tom Wilkinson, In the Bedroom

Best Supporting Actor

Jim Broadbent, Iris
 Ethan Hawke, Training Day
 Ben Kingsley, Sexy Beast
 Ian McKellen, Lord of the Rings
 Jon Voight, Ali

Best Actress

Halle Berry, Monster's Ball
 Judi Dench, Iris
 Nicole Kidman, Moulin Rouge
 Sissy Spacek, In the Bedroom
 Renee Zellweger, Bridget Jones's Diary

Best Supporting Actress

Jennifer Connelly, A Beautiful Mind
 Helen Mirren, Gosford Park

Maggie Smith, Gosford Park
 Marisa Tomei, In the Bedroom
 Kate Winslet, Iris

Best Animated Film

Monster's Inc.
 Shrek
 Jimmy Neutron, Boy Genius

Art Direction

Amelie
 Gosford Park
 Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone
 The Lord of the Rings
 Moulin Rouge

Cinematography

Amelie
 Black Hawk Down
 The Lord of the Rings
 The Man Who Wasn't There
 Moulin Rouge

Costume Design

The Affair of the Necklace
 Gosford Park
 The Lord of the Rings
 Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone
 Moulin Rouge

Best Director

A Beautiful Mind, Ron Howard
 Black Hawk Down, Ridley Scott
 Gosford Park, Robert Altman
 Lord of the Rings, Peter Jackson

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*"This comet came crashing into the earth. BAM! Total devastation. No celebrities,
 no cable TV, *no water*!*

It hasn't rained in 11 years.

Now, 20 people gotta squeeze into the same bathtub. So it ain't all bad."

Tank Girl (1995)

AWARDS

(Continued from page 9)

Mulholland Drive, Peter Lynch

Best Documentary

Children Underground

Lalee's Kin: The Legacy of Cotton

Murder on a Sunday Morning

Promises

War Photographer

Film Editing

A Beautiful Mind

Black Hawk Down

Lord of the Rings

Memento

Moulin Rouge

Foreign Language Film

No Man's Land

Amelie

Elling

Lagaan

Son of the Bride

Makeup

A Beautiful Mind

Lord of the Rings

Moulin Rouge

Original Score

AI

A Beautiful Mind

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

The Lord of the Rings

Monsters, Inc.

Original Song

If I Didn't Have You, Monster's Inc.

May It Be, Lord of the Rings
There You'll Be, Pearl Harbor
Until, Kate & Leopold
Vanilla Sky, Vanilla Sky

Sound

Amelie

Black Hawk Down

Lord of the Rings

Moulin Rouge

Pearl Harbor

Sound Editing

Monster's Inc.

Pearl Harbor

Visual Effects

AI

Lord of the Rings

Pearl Harbor

Screenplay (Adapted)

A Beautiful Mind

Ghost World

In The Bedroom

Lord of the Rings

Shrek

Screenplay (original)

Amelie

Gosford Park

Memento

Monster's Ball

Royal Tenenbaums

Razzies

(Continued on page 11)

"Sometimes I think there's something wrong with me."

"I've never met anyone born after 1965 who wasn't incomplete somehow."

"Why is that?"

"Microwave owens, I think."

Love and Human Remains (1993)

AWARDS

(Continued from page 10)

And of course there are the not-so-prestigious awards, the Razzies. Nominations were announced Feb. 11 and winners will be announced on March 23. They are awarded to the worst Hollywood gave us last year.

Worst Picture

Driven
 Freddy Got Fingered
 Glitter
 Pearl Harbor
 3000 Miles to Graceland

Worst Actor

Ben Affleck, Pearl Harbor
 Kevin Costner, 3000 Miles to Graceland
 Tom Green, Freddy Got Fingered
 Keanu Reeves, Hardball and Sweet November
 John Travolta, Swordfish and Domestic Disturbance

Worst Actress

Mariah Carey, Glitter
 Penelope Cruz, Blow, Captain Corelli's Mandolin and Vanilla Sky
 Angelina Jolie, Lara Croft: Tomb Raider and Original Sin
 Jennifer Lopez, Angel Eyes and Wedding Planner
 Charlize Theron, Sweet November

Worst Screen Couple

Ben Affleck and Kate Beckinsale and/or Josh Hartnett Pearl Harbor
 Mariah Carey's Cleavage, Glitter
 Tom Green and any animal he abuses, Freddy Got Fingered
 Burt Reynolds and Sylvester Stallone, Driven
 Kurt Russell and Either Kevin Costner or Courtney

Cox, 3000 Miles to Graceland

Worst Supporting Actor

Max Beesley, Glitter
 Charlton Heston, Cats and Dogs, Planet of the Apes, and Town & Country
 Burt Reynolds, Driven
 Sylvester Stallone, Driven
 Rip Torn, Freddy Got Fingered

Worst Supporting Actress

Drew Barrymore, Freddy Got Fingered
 Courtney Cox, 3000 Miles to Graceland
 Julie Haggerty, Freddy Got Fingered
 Goldie Hawn, Town & Country
 Estella Warren, Planet of the Apes and Driven

Worst Remake or Sequel

Crocodile Dundee in LA
 Jurassic Park III
 Pearl Harbor
 Planet of the Apes
 Sweet November

Worst Director

Micheal Bay, Pearl Harbor
 Peter Cholsom w/Warren Beatty, Town & Country
 Tom Green, Freddy Got Fingered
 Vondie Curtis Hall, Glitter
 Renny Harlin, Driven

Worst Screenplay

Driven
 Freddy Got Fingered
 Glitter
 Pearl Harbor
 3000 Miles to Graceland

"I have a new play."

"What's it called?"

"Romeo and Ethel the Pirate's Daughter."

"What is the story?"

"Well, there's this pirate..."

Shakespeare in Love (1998)

Next Issue, *Coming Attractions*

Next Issue

Ah, April. Spring will finally be here and Hollywood will be pummeling us with all the trailers for the summer blockbusters.

But luckily we will also have our next issue, to help guide you through the good, the bad and the "what in the world is that?" movies. I should also have the reviews for both Haiku Tunnel and the Session 9 DVDs.

See you in 30!

Submit something!

I'm always looking for help in putting this magazine out. So if you have any opinions, views, interesting facts or long ramblings please send them to me. 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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The Evil Dead (Book of the Dead Special Edition) ★

In the Mood for Love-Criterion Collection

Replacement Killers-Special Edition

3/12

Sexy Beast

Zoolander

Heist

Joy Ride

Horror 101

Night of the Living Dead-Millennium Edition

Juliet of the Spirits-Criterion Collection

George Washington-Criterion Collection

3/19

Training Day

2001: A Space Travesty

Riding in Cars with Boys

Hunchback of Notre Dame (Disney)

Hunchback of Notre Dame II

Oz, Season 1

Samurai Jack-Premiere ★

3/26

K-PAX

Life as a House

Original Sin

Our Lady of the Assassins

Star Trek: The Next Generation-Season 1 ★

Xena, Warrior Princess Finale-Director's Cut

Rashoman-Criterion Collection

Farscape #11

MST3K-I Accuse My Parents

MST3K-Red Zone Cuba

Todd McFarlane: Devil You Know

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Negative Clippings

Surprise! Sometimes a movie will pull a total switch at the end, giving the audience something to think about. When it works, it can be a great ending. As you can see in these films:

Unbreakable

Sixth Sense

The Others

Fight Club