

Outrageous Fortune

Review by
Lois Wadsworth

This pointless piece of fluff starring Bette Midler, Shelly Long, Peter Coyote, and George Carlin is good for a couple of laughs.

Shelly Long is an uptight, classically trained, aspiring actress, and a bit of a bubble head to boot. Bette Midler is an actress, too, but she's taken a shadier avenue to find show biz fame. The women don't hit it off when they run into each other at an audition for a pompous theatrical coach. When the two of them discover that they've both been lovers with the same man (Peter Coyote), who has mysteriously disappeared, they have a good fight and then decide to team up and find him.

This thin soup gets artificially thickened with Russian and American spies, but it never turns into a hearty dish. It certainly will not satisfy those die-hard fans still hungry for something more substantial than this kind of weight-watchers fare from the comically stellar Divine Miss M. Indeed, this particular meal vanishes entirely from memory within a few hours at most.

There are a few good scenes, mostly because Long and Midler really have fun hamming it up. The poor-foreign-sisters routine they do to get information from the airline official is pure baloney but fun. A scene on the beach at night in which the two women try to get caught in the elusive spotlight from a helicopter is ingenious. Bette delivers her smutty, suggestive lines with a streetwise moxie that deflates the pretentiously smug character Long plays, and the contrast between their personalities forms the only continuity this rather splotchy production musters.

Peter Coyote plays the sleazy boyfriend and George Carlin plays a drunk hippie-Indian hoping to make a few bucks as a guide, but their roles are poorly defined and their acting not very fulfilling.

The scenes shot on location in New Mexico are quite beautiful, but even the scenery isn't enough to make up for the inane plot and lack of substance *Outrageous Fortune* offers. Come on, guys, bringing in right-wing political fantasies about the Russkie spies trying to take over Amerika is insulting to an audience that just wants to hear Bette talk dirty. I mean, how dumb do they think we are, anyway?

Crocodile Dundee

Review by
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Formulaic fare, this predictable adventure fantasy features Paul Hogan as a crocodile killer-hero in the Australian outback and as an unbelievably naive fool in the big city.

A beautiful, vacuous young woman who works for her Daddy's big New York newspaper is down in Australia where she's found a backwoods hero she wants to interview. Mick "Crocodile" Dundee is heroic in the Old West (or should I say Old Western) mode. He's never lived in a city, horses around a lot with the boys in the bar, and does "manly" things in the woods—illegal things like poaching—killing crocodiles for their skins.

The girl reporter survives her few days in the wilderness despite a croc attack. She challenges Dundee to test his survival skills on her home turf. Sure enough, the real test of his manhood comes on the streets and in the bathrooms and bars of New York City where twentieth century perils like crossing the street, overcoming the toilet mystery and mastering the escalator ride are waiting to befuddle his senses.

The story is simplistic and the characterizations are shallow. Paul Hogan, who wrote himself the starring role, is supposed to be a laconic, Gary Cooper-type—a soft-spoken man of great deeds. Instead

Hogan is a not-too-bright fellow who, mercifully, has relatively few spoken lines.

Mostly, old Crocodile "acts," that is, he dispatches one perceived enemy after another, leaving them loopy with one well placed (but discreet) punch. He relates to the woman with a studied animal attraction as if he wanted to "tame" her like the wild beasts who lie down after looking in his eyes. However, his basic social coarseness is not charming—it's just sexist.

Linda Kozlowski is so dreadful that I assume she was cast strictly for her swimsuit model looks. Her character reminds me of the girl reporters of romantic forties movies, but she is no more a contemporary working journalist than my Aunt Fanny. The lies in this film begin and end with this kind of dishonesty.

Crocodile Dundee has racist overtones as well, although they are artfully concealed under cover of Dundee's incredulous "innocence." To show that Mick likes the aborigines, we are treated to the sight of this jerk sitting around the campfire with the tribal elders, in makeup. He's taking part in a high-level pow-wow, a little ritual "for the men of the tribe only." Of course, the twerpy female has to sneak through the jungle in the dead of night to take pictures (no flash) with her handy-dandy camera.

Enough of this trashing—now for the hard part. Why do so many people pay good money to see this movie? Pay them. According to *Variety*, the picture "drew one dollar out of every six" spent last year by moviegoers. That makes it the number two box-office hit of the year, second only to *Top Gun*, a picture that appealed to the same general audience.

I believe the success of *Crocodile Dundee* depends on the very predictability of its slapstick-like crude humor, trite love story, and broad characters devoid of depth and authenticity. It's the sort of commodity a slick promoter would see as just right for an audience of television watchers conditioned not to expect their entertainment to be smart or say anything. Painless, cute. I think that ole Croc is a pretty smart feller to pull a little \$55 million scam like this over on them city slickers.



The Best Of (Sort Of) Show will be presented by Live Matinee for three weekends beginning Friday, the 13th.

Best of Live Matinee

If you're looking for fun on Friday the 13th—you're in luck. Live Matinee begins a three weekend run of its *Best of (Sort of) Show* at Cinema 7 on February 13 at 7:30 pm and 9:30 pm, followed by a 2 pm matinee on Saturday, February 14 (the Valentine's Day show is dedicated to all of you who "love to laugh").

Live Matinee has performed original, live comedy on stage at Cinema 7 for the past 9 years. Now, for the first time, the eight member group will recreate select hits from its 24 previous shows, which date back to November, 1978. The *Best of (Sort of) Show* will feature many of Live Matinee's most popular skits, songs and films, some of which were requested by fans in an unscientific survey conducted during the past several months.

Subsequent performances are

scheduled for February 20 & 21, 27 & 28. Showtimes are identical for all three weekends. Children under the age of 12 will not be admitted (nothing personal—they say it's for your own protection).

The late show on Friday, February 20, is your chance to be part of the Live Matinee video. That 9:30 performance is slated to be videotaped for commercial distribution by Independent Video Services of Eugene. The video performance is open to the public; regular admission will be charged. All audience members will be required to sign a release form and may be asked to stay after the show for some additional taping.

Tickets for all shows are sold at the door on a first come basis 20 minutes prior to each performance. Cinema 7 is located on the second floor of the Atrium Building at 10th and Olive.

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