

CINEMA



Johnny Depp stars as the bizarre Ed Wood. The movie, directed by Tim Burton, is a biography of the late film director known for his oddities.

'Ed Wood' brings to life the weirdness of a director

Greg Hamilton
For the Oregon Daily Emerald

Hollywood director Ed Wood was weird and everyone knew it.

From borrowing his wives' Angora sweaters to recruiting a professional wrestler as his leading man, Wood was known for his unusual flair and legendary low-budget attitude.

Upon the eve of directing his ignominious masterpiece *Plan Nine from Outer Space*, he was quoted as saying, "This will be the film I'll be remembered for."

Well Ed, you got your wish.

Almost 40 years later, the late Ed Wood is finally receiving his due via a film biography, along with a little help from *Batman* director and self-confessed weirdhead, Tim Burton.

Transvestites, tombstones and Tim. Ah yes, Mr. Burton and his propensity for visualizing the left-handed side of life is the perfect match for one so weird as Mr. Wood. Only the creator of *Edward Scissorhands* and *Beetlejuice* could serve up a film biography so that the audience can be both sympathetic and repulsed by the hero. He's a cheap-jack director with the heart of a fawn and the instincts of a dung beetle.

The actor who assumes this lofty and bizarre role of Wood is none other than ex-teen hope-chest idol Johnny Depp, who saw action as one of Burton's other cinematic oddities, *Edward Scissorhands*. This time around, Depp really gets a chance to exude the oily, yet innocent role.

As Ed Wood, he slips on the visage of a cheap Hollywood actor, always hoping for the big quality role and ultimately settling for whatever pays the bills. Whether it be shamelessly selling himself to wealthy greedheads who want their relatives cast in the lead, or baptizing his entire cast and crew (including Bill Murray) in order to obtain film funding from the First Baptist Church of Beverly Hills, Depp digs deeply, seeking both the

Ed Wood

Johnny Depp and Martin Landau
Rated: R

★★★★

comedic and pathetic elements of Wood's character.

Among the most important aspects of the film is Ed Wood's discovery and ultimate friendship with then-washed-up horror actor Bela Lugosi, who was picking out a personal coffin at the time Wood ran across him. Lugosi, brilliantly portrayed by Martin Landau, is a man suffering from a vampire stereotype as well as a serious addiction to morphine with a Demerol chaser.

Wood was not so quickly put off by these minor deterrents and quickly began casting him in his films, seeking to use Lugosi's past fame to aid his own cinematic breakthrough. This was the stepping stone that would lead to Wood's infamous career as the World's Worst Director.

This vicious title is the catalyst Burton uses to make *Ed Wood* the masterpiece that it is. In Wood's desire to "make the film," he compromises in ways that make Richard Nixon look like Abe Lincoln. He steals a robotic octopus from a movie lot, but forgets to take the motor. He shoots scenes in one take, no matter how bad they are. His cinematic hubris ultimately becomes the comedic avenue that drives the film.

Of course this chaos takes a certain amount of directorial expertise, and Burton does it with the instincts of an auteur, bringing to black and white (with the help of cinematographer Stefan Czapsky) the wretched weirdness of a B-movie director gone odd.

Ed Wood is really a film buff's film, but it is able to reach many others through its sentimental yet satirical take on the life of a gonzo director. Although the film may drag at certain points with its sharp eye for detail, *Ed Wood* ultimately satisfies with its dark wit and charm.

\$10

For 18 holes with current UO Student I.D.

- 18 hole course
- No tee times
- Challenging par-61 course



OAKWAY GOLF

2000 Cal Young Rd. • 484-1927

come to a free **LSAT** seminar & Test Drive

Average Score Improvement* **LSAT** +7.2 points* get a higher score **KAPLAN**

Date: October 11
Time: 5:00-10:00pm
Location: 720 East 13th #303
Eugene, OR 97401
Call 345-4420 to reserve a space!

*As documented in the May 1994 Kaplan LSAT Performance Study conducted by Price Waterhouse.



Please Recycle This Paper



You Want Software?

We've Got Software!

Low educational discount prices on software for your Macintosh or PC.

Adobe • Aldus • Claris • Microsoft • WordPerfect • & more...

Microcomputer Support Center

202 Computing Center
Monday - Friday
9AM - 5PM
346-4402
e-mail: mpp@oregon

Educational discounts available to eligible UO students, faculty and staff.