

# 'Gladiator' lives up to its sizable price tag

■ The actors' outstanding performances complement the film's intense storyline



## Gladiator

Starring Russell Crowe, Joaquin Phoenix, Connie Nielsen, and Oliver Reed. Directed by Ridley Scott. Dreamworks Pictures/Universal Pictures.

★★★★★

By Joe Walsh

Oregon Daily Emerald

Visually stunning and emotionally gripping, "Gladiator" is one of very few epic undertakings that delivers the goods.

At a budget of \$100 million, one might think "Gladiator" may be one of those movies that is

more impressive on paper than on the big screen. A flexing of Hollywood muscle or a boasting of technical achievement, they may assume. And who can blame them? After all, these are probably the same people who sat through "Waterworld."

But never judge a movie by its budget.

The plot thickens as often as the blood falls in this engaging tale of a general-turned, slave-turned gladiator. Through it all, the rancorous hero, Maximus, played by Russell Crowe, exudes an audacity that unnerves even the great Roman emperor.

Calm and determined, Maximus fights and kills with disturbing proficiency but never with pleasure. He kills when he has to kill, but all the while, he wants nothing but to return to his family

and his simple life as a farmer. Yet it's his valor and skills as a fighter that ironically keep him from his dreams.

In the beginning, Maximus is a highly-respected Roman general

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who gains the favor of his soldiers and the aging emperor, Marcus Aurelius (Richard Harris), with his bravery on the battlefield.

When the emperor dies and his son Commodus (Joaquin Phoenix) takes the throne, Max-

imus is condemned to execution escaping only to be sold as a slave.

Not long after, the dejected physical specimen is purchased by Proximo (the late Oliver Reed), a gladiator manager. Forced to fight for his life, Maximus leads a small group of gladiators to several underdog victories, eventually defeating some of Rome's fiercest fighters in the Coliseum.

Eventually, Commodus is compelled to meet the mysterious gladiator known simply as "The Spaniard" and learns in a riveting scene that Maximus, who was supposed to be dead, is very much alive and dangerously gaining the favor of Rome.

As Maximus' popularity grows, so does Commodus' contempt and madness. Commodus knows, however, that he cannot

kill the hero and lose the wavering support of Rome, which has already tagged him as spineless and weak.

An ambitious classic-in-the-making, "Gladiator" easily positions itself next to other Roman empire-centered epics such as "Spartacus" and "Ben Hur." With its absorbing storyline of revenge set against a flood of violent battle scenes, "Gladiator" will also elicit comparisons to the Academy Award-winning "Braveheart," and rightly so.

With outstanding performances from the stalwart Crowe and the wonderfully vile Phoenix along with cutting-edge cinematography and a relentless storyline without a dull moment, don't be surprised when "Gladiator" captures a few awards of its own next March.

## Fans of late-night shows can get their laughs on-line

■ Three popular late-night talk shows offer Web sites that include jokes and television clips

By Joe Walsh

Oregon Daily Emerald

The late night talk shows are great, but who can stay up that late and still make it to that 8 a.m. class? But thanks to the Internet, those who love Conan, Dave and Jay can get the laughs without the hassle of staying awake until early in the morning.

**Late Night with Conan O'Brien**  
([www.nbc.com/latenight](http://www.nbc.com/latenight))

As usual, Conan O'Brien distances himself from the other late night players with his on-the-edge humor and bizarre imagination. His Web site features links to many of "Late Night's" comedy

staples.

Among these are "If They Mated," (ever wondered what would happen if Ben Stiller hooked up with Calista Flockhart), "New Stamps" (featuring the "Many Faces of Bob Dole" and the "Decline of Marlon Brando" postage stamp series), and the ever-amusing "In the Year 2000" sketch.

There are also Real Player clips of some of Conan's best moments as well as clips from the hilarious public service announcement parodies, "The More You Know," where Conan, Andy and Max do their parts "to make things more good."

Besides garnering the most laughs, the Web site's also the fastest and easiest site to cruise through. ... A+

**The Late Show with David Letterman**  
([www.cbs.com/lateshow](http://www.cbs.com/lateshow))

They had the true "Late Show" fan in mind when they cooked up this little number. Featuring the best of everything Dave has ever done, there is no shortage of entertainment here.

A link dedicated to Top Ten lists offers everything from a year-by-year archive of every Top Ten list since Letterman moved to CBS to a contest that allows viewers to submit their own Top Tens. Last week's list: "Top Ten Signs You Hired The Wrong Guy To Do Your Taxes." Also included are several of Dave's routine comedy pieces, including small town news and rejected commercial characters, such as "Boris the Band-Aid that Took Off Half the Hair on Your Arm."

Web surfers can also view Dave's monologues and greatest hits via Real Player, listen to past music guests, request tickets to

the show, e-mail Dave and buy "Late Show" merchandise. Haven't you always wanted one of those sweatshirts? ... A

**The Tonight Show with Jay Leno**  
([www.nbc.com/tonightshow](http://www.nbc.com/tonightshow))

With an informational focus, Leno's site is not as entertaining as the others. Links to upcoming guests and musicians give "Tonight Show" fans information that could just as easily be found in TV Guide.

There are, however, a handful

of fun features such as Leno's headlines (actual headlines from newspapers that contain hilarious mistakes) and a goofy item known as "Virtual Jay," which requires a Pulse Player plug-in. Fans can also relive Leno's past monologues via Real Player.

But this site just doesn't offer the hours of mindless entertainment that Web surfers want. Plus, it's the slowest of the three sites, and many of the features require plug-ins, which further slows things down ... C-

## Entertainment Briefs

### Eugene Symphony plans its season finale

The Eugene Symphony will bring their season to a close tonight, with a performance of Mendelssohn's St. Paul Overture and other musical expressions of faith and hope, including ancient Taoist traditions and a Jewish prayer for the dead.

Leonard Bernstein's "Kaddish" powers its way to the heavens with the thunderous forces of the orchestra, a 160-voice chorus, soprano Kelley Nassief and actor Barry Kraft.

Tickets are \$12 to \$36, or \$10 for youth and students, and are available at the Hult Center Box Office and the EMU Ticket Outlet.

### Museum of Natural History exhibits a variety of cultures

Several exhibits are on display at the University of Oregon Museum of Natural History, 1680 E. 15th Ave.

Exhibits include "Archaeology of Oregon," "Backyard Birds," "Clues to an Unknown Culture," "Living Traditions," "Visions of the Dreamtime: The Art and Myth of Aboriginal Australia" and an articulated La Brea Tar Pits saber-toothed cat.

Museum hours are noon to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. There is a \$2 suggested donation, though admission is free for University students and museum members. For information call 346-3024.

"Mingqi: Early Chinese Funerary Ceramics" is currently one of the featured exhibits at the Museum of Art, located at 1430 Johnson Lane. The exhibit includes a selection of Chinese funerary tomb figures from the Han Dynasty (202 B.C.-220 A.D.) through the Tang Dynasty (618-906 A.D.).

In the museum's Chinese Imperial Throne Room, the public can view works from the museum's collection of Imperial objects from the Qing Dynasty, including textiles, furniture, glass, ceramics and the largest jade pagoda outside China.

The museum also features the newly renovated Preble-Murphy Wing of Japanese Art, including a changing print gallery with traditional wood-block prints. A second gallery offers highlights from the collections including Buddhist sculpture, textiles, ceramics, metalwork, hanging scrolls and painted screens.

Museum hours are noon to 8 p.m. Wednesday and noon to 5 p.m. Thursday through Sunday. There is a \$3 suggested admission charge, though admission is free for students, University employees and their children and museum members. For more information, call 346-3027.

### UO dance students debut original works

Nine undergraduate University students in the dance department will present dances at "Ground Zero: Reinventing

Dance in the Year 2000," the annual spring student dance concert on May 18-20.

Performances will begin at 8 p.m. each evening in the Dougherty Dance Theater in the Gerlinger Annex.

Among the three senior projects set to debut in the concert are "Saturated" by Sarah Baker, "The Long Night of Lady Day" by Sara Lybarger, and "Hoo Yoo War" by Celeste Peterson.

With faculty advisement, the presenting choreographers not only created the dances, but were also responsible for the audition, publicity, fund raising costumes and other elements required to produce the show.

Tickets are \$6 for general admission and \$3 for students, and are available at 7 p.m. at the door.

### UO concerts scheduled

Two concerts are scheduled to highlight the skills of University students this week.

Flute students will give a class recital at 8 p.m. Sunday in Beall Concert Hall, 961 E. 18th Ave. Admission to the concert is free.

And at 8 p.m. May 17, the Oregon Wind Ensemble will perform several classics, including "Fantasia in G" by J.S. Bach, at a joint concert with the Oregon Symphonic Band. The band will perform similar works, including "Come Sweet Death" by Bach.

Tickets are available at the door for \$3 for students and senior citizens or \$5 general admission.

all events are FREE



shawn macdonald

thu • may 11th 9:30-11:30pm	ethan david davidson acoustic folk/rock
fri • may 12th 9pm-midnight	eclectic open mic music • performance art • theatre
Sign-up to perform at The Break (located next to The Buzz) For more info call Melanie at 346-3725	
sat • may 13th 9:30-11:30pm	shawn mac donald blues
Sign-up to perform at The Break (located next to The Buzz) For more info call Melanie at 346-3725	
mon • may 15th 9pm-11:30pm	poetry open mic
Sign-up to perform at The Break (located next to The Buzz) For more info call Melanie at 346-3725	
tue • may 16th 8-10pm	university jazz combo
wed • may 17th 9:30-11:30pm	tom patterson acoustic
the buzz • emu ground floor	