

What's Poppin'?

What's popped and what's flopped, in a theater near you.

13 CONVERSATIONS ABOUT ONE THING

An ensemble cast—including John Turturro and Amy Irving as an unhappily married couple, Matthew McConaughey as a cocky attorney, Clea Duvall as an optimist who has her illusions shattered and Alan Arkin as a curmudgeonly workaholic—survive life crises and creeping futility in this wonderful new film. Writer/director Jill Sprecher (*Clockwatchers*) maintains perfect compassionate realism in both storytelling and visuals, making *13 Conversations* effortlessly moving and honestly life-affirming.

—Christopher McQuain



Tia Texada (left) and Clea Duvall lend to a killer ensemble cast in *13 Conversations About One Thing*

ABOUT A BOY

Chris and Paul Weitz (*American Pie*) directed this adaptation of a novel by Nick Hornby (*High Fidelity*) about a spoiled man (Hugh Grant) who tries to pick up chicks by posing as a single dad. Sounds like an episode of *Three's Company*, but things get serious when he meets a troubled kid (Nicholas Hoult) who turns his life around.

—Jim Radosta

THE BOURNE IDENTITY

Director Doug Liman (*Swingers*, *Go*) continues his winning streak with this old-school spy thriller starring yummy Matt Damon as an amnesiac on the run from the CIA. He and Franka Potente (*Run Lola Run*) show strong chemistry, but Julia Stiles is wasted in a thankless supporting role.

—JR

INSOMNIA

Director Christopher Nolan follows up *Memento* with a less original but equally absorbing tale about how the mind can play tricks on you. Al Pacino is outstanding as a far-from-perfect cop who cuts a deal with a killer (Robin Williams) to cover his unethical behind. Hilary Swank (*Boys Don't Cry*) is miscast once again as his wide-eyed sidekick.

—JR



Hilary Swank is miscast but pretty as ever in *Insomnia*

- ☹️ dud, bottom of the bag
- ☹️☹️ only if you're really hungry
- ☹️☹️☹️ good effort, pass the salt
- ☹️☹️☹️☹️ mmmm, tasty!
- ☹️☹️☹️☹️☹️ get the big tub o' corn

MINORITY REPORT

Steven Spielberg further explores his darker side in this innovative sci-fi thriller based on a short story by Philip K. Dick. Unfortunately, he can't help but insert several sequences that are either overly precious or downright silly. The Big Brother storyline has great potential that seems just beyond his grasp.

—JR

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS

What would happen if disaster struck a major U.S. city and the world was brought to the brink of calamity as a result? If you want the answer to that question, watch the national news; if you want to be overwhelmed by an overstuffed plot, go see this dud.

—JR

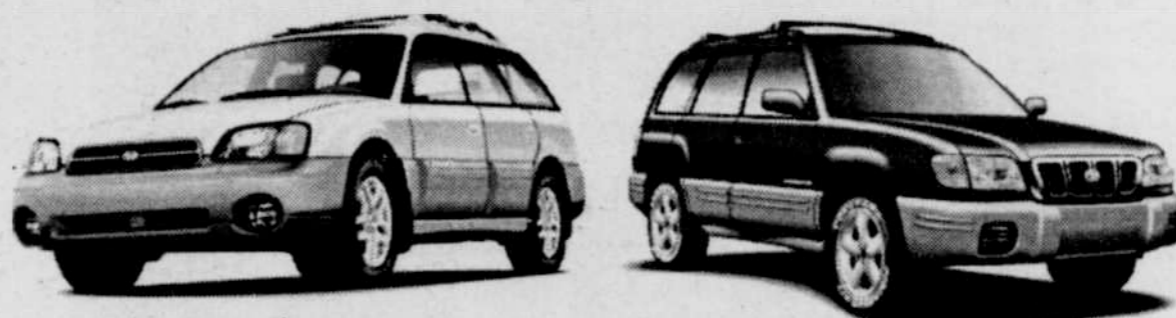
WINDTALKERS

John Woo directed this awful war story about the Navajos who helped create a code that could not be broken. Unfortunately, it's told from the perspective of pale-face Nicolas Cage, whose tormented overacting is totally incompatible with the wannabe-vintage style, the obvious dialogue and the shamelessly vague treatment given to this fascinating chapter of U.S. history. An early candidate for Worst Film of 2002.

—JR


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