



DOWN WITH LOVE

A very light but very enjoyable cinematic bauble, with Renée Zellweger and Ewan McGregor as the Doris Day and Rock Hudson characters from such '60s fluff as *Pillow Talk*. The filmmakers have taken great pains to re-create the perfect plastic-fantastic settings in which to play out the familiar, innuendo-laden scenario. See it, just be sure to brush your teeth afterward.

—Christopher McQuain

FINDING NEMO

Lame-ass Disney should get on its knees and thank the heavens it owns Pixar. Once again, the animation studio outdoes itself with its newest full-length feature about a clown fish dad (voiced by Albert Brooks, pretty much playing himself) whose only son is whisked away in a zip-lock bag by a human diver. With the aid of his new fish friend, Dory (voiced by Ellen DeGeneres, pretty much playing herself), normally skittish Dad faces sharks, whales and deadly jellyfish to find his offspring. Adults will have even more fun at this remarkably astute movie than the kiddies.

—Lisa Bradshaw

THE MATRIX RELOADED

The first *Matrix* was revolutionary in its special effects and fairly self-contained as a story. A knowledge of the first film is essential to *Reloaded*, which is full of sound and fury signifying...something. The film is essentially filled with cool FX sequences followed by quasi-philosophical doublespeak infodump, repeated and repeated until the cliffhanger ending. Effects are nice—sometimes even thrilling—though nothing revolutionary. But the theoretical rhetoric will likely have many audience members uttering a Keanu Reeves-esque "Huh?"

—Andy Mangels

A MIGHTY WIND

This folk music spoof from writer/director



Marlin (voice of Albert Brooks) and Dory (voice of Ellen DeGeneres) have a hard time avoiding trouble in the captivating *Finding Nemo*

Christopher Guest (*Waiting for Guffman*, *Best in Show*) misses a ripe opportunity for satire, especially in light of the country's recent resurgence of peaceniks. At least Jennifer Coolidge and Fred Willard keep things interesting, stealing every scene they're in.

—Jim Radosta

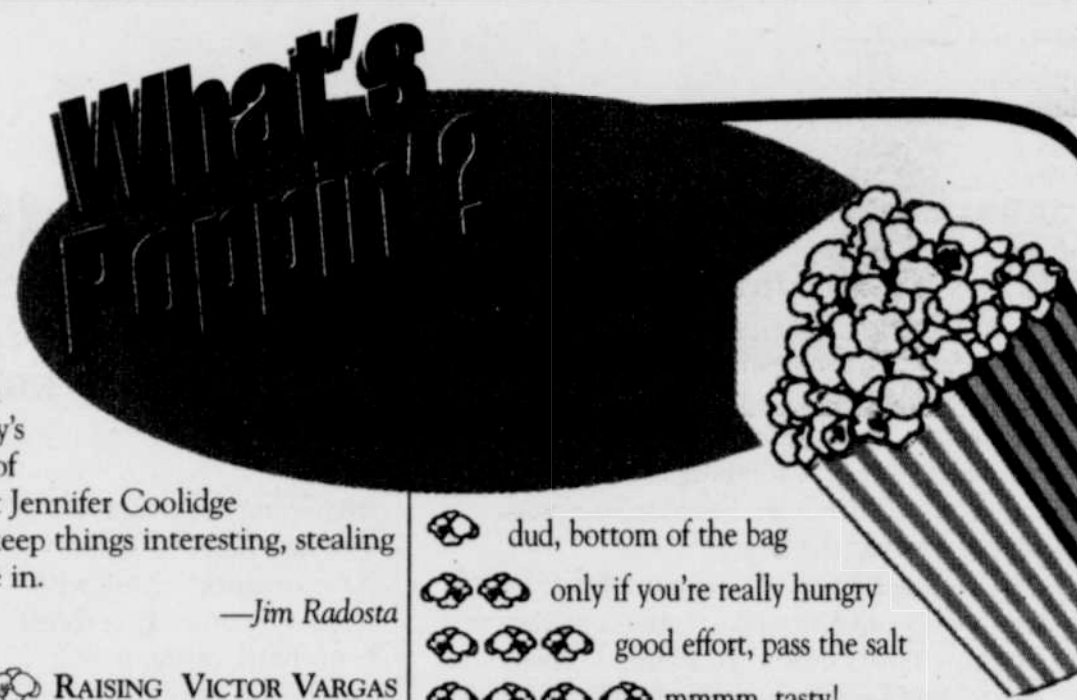
RAISING VICTOR VARGAS

Writer/director Peter Sollett's charming indie tells the story of a horny teen-ager from the Lower East Side (Victor Rasuk) pursuing an independent girl (Judy Marte) while enduring the rants of his conservative grandmother from the Dominican Republic (Altagracia Guzman). Well acted, touching and unbearably realistic.

—JR

THE SHAPE OF THINGS

Writer/director Neil LaBute's (*In the Company of Men*) adaptation of this interesting off-Broadway play is a bit rough—as evidenced by long, rather awkward takes—but the four young actors reprise their stage roles beautifully. Nerdy college student Adam (Paul Rudd) falls in love with edgy art major Evelyn (Rachel Weisz) and begins to change in ways that disturb his friends (Gretchen Mol and Fred Weller).



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

All four, particularly the feminist Evelyn, are complete stereotypes; still, the confusing and constant feeling of dread works perfectly, and the shocking (if abrupt) ending will keep you awake nights.

—LB

TOGETHER

Although it occasionally dips into unexpected schmaltz, this new film from Chinese writer/director Chen Kaige (*Farewell My Concubine*) is a lovely story about a small-village father who takes his son to Beijing to foster his amazing, inborn talent for the violin. Colorful characters, bustling scenery and surreally shot background narrative carry along the sometimes tired theme of dreams not always being worth the cost.

—LB



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