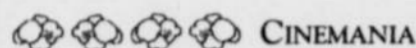


BEND IT LIKE BECKHAM

Whenever an independent film appeals to the masses, I can't help but worry, "What's wrong with this picture?" (Think *Chocolat*.) Fortunately, that isn't the case with this U.K. crowd-pleaser about an Indian girl who puts her soccer aspirations ahead of her parents' plans for an arranged marriage. Young audiences will be delighted by the queer-positive message when she is mistaken for a lesbian and when a male friend comes out of the closet.

—Jim Radosta



CINEMANIA

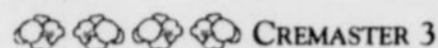
This hilarious yet disturbing documentary examines a little-known ailment plaguing a small segment of society: People who are hooked on moviegoing. (We're talking up to 2,000 films a year.) You might pity



You think you see a lot of movies? Go to Hollywood Theatre through July 24 for *Cinemanial!*

them as losers whose lives are crippled by addiction, but I often found myself empathizing with their poignant observations about the intoxicating draw of motion pictures.

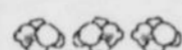
—JR



CREMASTER 3

New York artist Matthew Barney's film is, like the others in his celebrated, museum-bred *Cremaster* cycle (at Cinema 21 through July 24), literally dreamlike; it deals in the reality of the subconscious. Visually vivid and dialogue-free, *3* incorporates evocative, engrossing, sometimes nightmarish scenarios and images derived from Celtic mythology, Masonry, NYC architectural history, demolition derby and much more in an episodic but conceptually whole meditation on the struggle, triumph and failure of human endeavor.

—Christopher McQuain

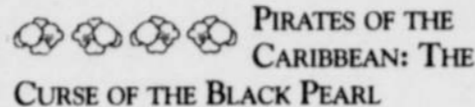


THE LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN

Brushing up on 19th century literature will help you catch all the references in this graphic novel adaptation. Characters from Oscar Wilde collide with the worlds of Edgar Allen Poe, Bram Stoker, Mark Twain and others in a twisty-turny action story that gets bogged down by some explanatory sequences. Its real strength lies not just in an excellent cast (led by Sean Connery)

but in the absolutely jaw-dropping scenery and sets. The 1800s never looked this splendid.

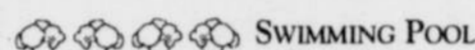
—Andy Mangels



PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: THE CURSE OF THE BLACK PEARL

Those waiting for the biggest, most fun popcorn movie of the summer should know it has arrived. Johnny Depp is hilariously nelly and off-kilter as a pirate who must reluctantly aid the hunky Orlando Bloom in his quest to rescue the woman he loves from the cursed pirates aboard the Black Pearl. Although it sags a bit in the middle, it's full of raucous action, a humorous story and some spectacularly creepy skeleton effects.

—AM



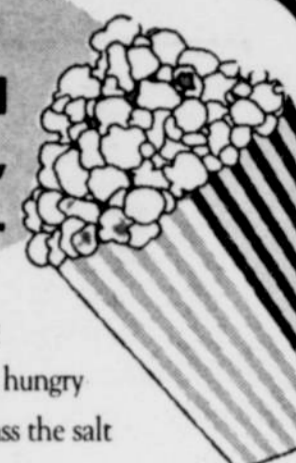
SWIMMING POOL

Gay filmmaker François Ozon (*Under the Sand*) offers another curious romp in the French countryside as British mystery writer Sarah Morton (Charlotte Rampling) secludes herself in her publisher's home for relaxation and to rejuvenate her unsatisfying work. Much to her chagrin, the publisher's young daughter (Ludivine Sagnier, looking much grown up from her perky, teen-age role in Ozon's *8 Women*) arrives to make her life difficult. Simple conflict is made creepy and tense under the writer/director's fine hand, and performances are impeccable.

—Lisa Bradshaw

What's Poppin'?

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



☹️ dud, bottom of the bag

☹️☹️ only if you're really hungry

☹️☹️☹️ good effort, pass the salt

☹️☹️☹️☹️ mmmm, tasty!

☹️☹️☹️☹️☹️ get the big tub o' corn

☹️☹️☹️ 28 DAYS LATER...

Director Danny Boyle (*Shallow Grave*, *Trainspotting*) unwisely used ugly digital video to shoot his zombie horror flick about a SARS-like plague that eliminates most of the human race, leaving a few brave souls (including hottie newcomer Cillian Murphy) struggling for survival. Imaginative premise, dull execution.

—JR

☹️☹️☹️☹️☹️ WINGED MIGRATION

From the makers of 1996's *Microcosmos* comes this Oscar-nominated documentary that follows our flying friends as they head south for the winter. Far from a typical nature film, it carries a subtle yet unmistakable political message about ecology, perseverance and teamwork. The breathtaking, groundbreaking cinematography must be seen to be believed.

—JR



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