

ALFIE

Jude Law is the titular philanderer in this stylish yet unnecessary remake of the 1966 classic starring Michael Caine. Gorgeous shots of New York City and Susan Sarandon can't hide the fact that the film is rather dated and ultimately pointless. Hey,



PHOTO BY MELINDA SUE GORDON

What's in gonna be, Jude?

Jude certainly provides lots of eye candy, but those are just empty calories.

—Jim Radosta

BIRTH

I needed a shower after watching this creepy snoozer starring Nicole Kidman as a widow whose husband comes back from the dead in the body of a 10-year-old boy. The two of them wind up naked together in a bathtub, if that gives you any idea of the perv factor displayed by director Jonathan Glazer (*Sexy Beast*). I haven't felt this dirty since I saw *Powder*.

—JR

THE GRUDGE

Cheap frights abound in Takeshi Shimizu's solid remake of his fabulously freaky Japanese thriller *Ju-On*. This time around, Americans abroad in Japan are unfortunate enough to set foot in a troubled house where a man killed his wife, his son and himself. Anyone who enters the house faces the merciless wrath of the murder victims. A lackluster Sarah Michelle Gellar (*Ms. Buffy* herself) heads an otherwise strong cast.

—Stephen Blair

THE INCREDIBLES

Pixar takes animation to the next level of jaw-dropping awesomeness with yet another highly marketable movie aimed at both kids and their parents. The premise: Mr. Incredible and his family (Elastigirl, Violet Girl and Dash

) are repressed superheroes, stuffing their fantastical powers away to please the rest of the world. Sarah Vowell pulls off a particularly hilarious voice-over as the insecure daughter with a closet of black clothes and an even blacker mood.

—Cori Taratoot

SIDEWAYS

A blocked writer (Paul Giamatti) and a washed-up actor who's about to get married (Thomas Haden Church) take a life-changing road trip through California's wine country and hook up with a couple of women (Virginia Madsen and Sandra Oh, both outstanding and underrated actresses) along the way. Witty, hilarious and poignant. Like a good pinot, writer/director Alexander Payne (*Citizen Ruth*, *Election*, *About Schmidt*) just keeps getting better with age.

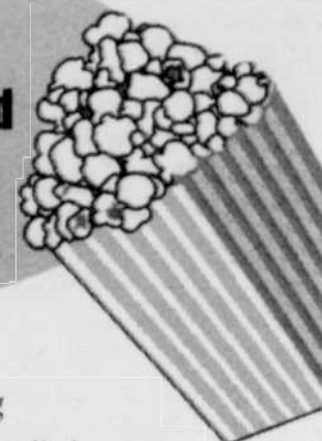
—JR

UNDERTOW

David Gordon Green (*All the Real Girls*) serves up this sweaty, tense thriller about a rural Georgia clan that goes to hell in a hand-basket. John (Dermot Mulroney) lives a simple life with his two sons until his scumbag brother Deel (Josh Lucas) shows up to claim the family fortune at any cost. The entire cast is excellent,

What's Poppin'?

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



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

but Jamie Bell of *Billy Elliot* fame stands out as John's volatile son Chris.

—SB

A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT

Amélie director Jean-Pierre Jeunet reunites with actress Audrey Tautou to tell another magical, sexy, imaginative story—this time about a young woman's obsessive search for her fiancé, who went missing in action during World War I. Jodie Foster pops in for an impressive cameo to show off her French fluency, but even her captivating presence couldn't keep me from wondering when this *Very Long* movie would arrive at its inevitable conclusion.

—JR



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