

## REVIEWS

### BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF REASON

Are you dying to know what our plump British friend has been up to since 2001's *Bridget Jones's Diary*? Apparently, she's been spending a lot of time at the lobotomist's office, because this sequel is vvvv stupid. Bridget (Renée Zellweger) is six weeks into her blossoming relationship with Mark Darcy (Colin Firth) and does lots of ridiculous, neurotic things to screw it up. By the time she starts teaching a bunch of Thai cellmates how to sing Madonna's "Like a Virgin," you'll be ready to throttle director Beeban Kidron (*To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar*) for ruining everything that the first film accomplished.

—Jim Radosta

### HARD GOODBYES: MY FATHER

Director Penny Panagiotopoulos' first feature, set in Athens in 1969, is a remarkably assured debut. At the center of the drama is 10-year-old Elias, an obstinate, imaginative kid working through the death of the father he worshipped. Unable to accept what's happened, he engages in elaborate strategies to keep his dad "alive," from impersonating his voice in dialogues to showering his classmates with candy supposedly from his dad. A bit overlong, the film is nonetheless affecting without being sentimental, with flashes of wry humor. Yiorgos Karagiannis won the Best Actor Award at the Locarno Film Festival for his exceptional portrayal of Elias.

—Gary Morris

### LIGHTNING IN A BOTTLE

Talk about timely. With the recent completion of phase two of the Republican coup d'état, half the country is singing the blues. But to hear it done professionally, check out this documentary—a record of 2003's "Salute to the Blues" at Radio City Musical Hall, celebrating 100 years of this peculiarly American art form.

A few historical clips offer vague context, but most of the action is live-on-stage music by old-school legends like BB King, Buddy Guy and Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, mixing it up with younger talents of varying, well,

Clean" and Buddy Guy smoking on Jimi Hendrix's "Red House" give this film enough great moments to forget the failures.

—GM

### THE MACHINIST

Apparently inspired by the Olsen twins, Christian Bale lost 63 pounds to headline this moody psychological thriller. Bale—so bony and gaunt that he's painful to look at—expertly plays Trevor Reznik, a machine operator who hasn't slept for a year. After playing hangman with an invisible opponent, and after several run-ins with a mysterious bruiser, Trevor suspects that everyone is out to get him. *The Machinist* is engrossing and truly unsettling for the first hour. But the picture surrenders to trite, convoluted plot twists as it fumbles toward its conclusion.

—Stephen Blair

### THE SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS MOVIE

If you're like me, and you have no clue who—or what—SpongeBob SquarePants is, here's the deal. First, as the 6-year-old seated next to me pointed out, SpongeBob is a kitchen sponge, not an ocean sponge. But he does live at the bottom of the ocean. And he does wear square pants. First a Nickelodeon series, and now a big-screen production, SpongeBob gets the munchkins giggling with his friend Patrick the starfish and their boozy adventures inhaling bubbles and ice cream sundaes. But parents? Have a strong drink before you head into this one—SpongeBob's emotional IQ requires a narrative and comedic sensibility that only a first-grader could love.

—Cori Taratoot

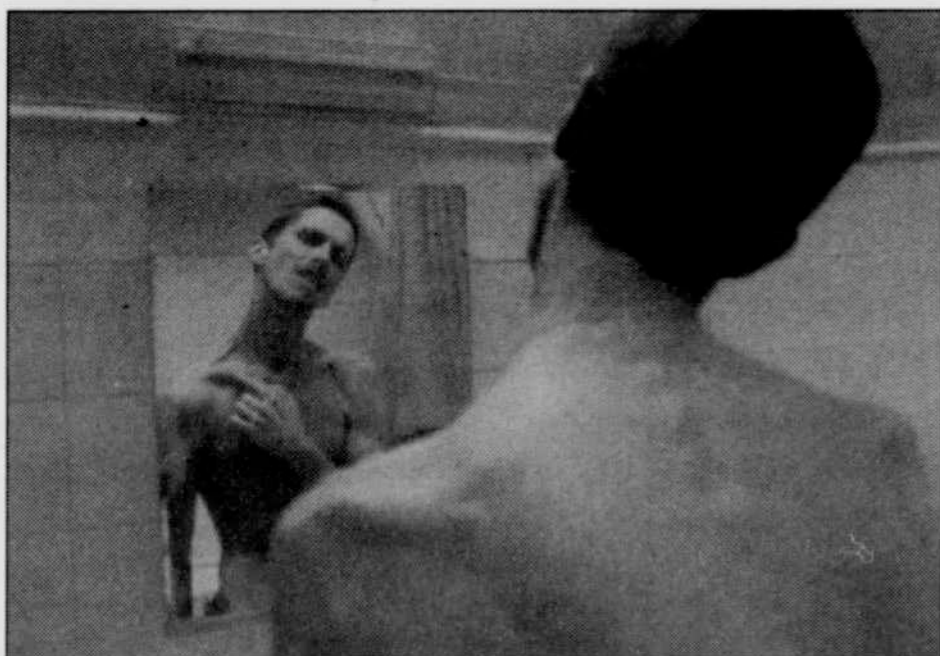
### STANDER

Set in the tumult of South African apartheid—starting with the Soweto massacre of 1976, when police murdered hundreds of peaceful black protesters—*Stander* is based on the true story of one man's unusual rebellion against an impossible society. Sickened by the brutal suppression of 85 percent of the population and his own part in it after killing an unarmed protester, white police Capt. Andre Stander turns to bank robbing à la Butch Cassidy. Stander's expert, inventive robberies make him a folk hero, and the movie gets comic mileage out of the many disguises he adopts, which include an orthodox Muslim and a hippie.

Director Bronwen Hughes challenges the cliché that women can't direct action films by setting a gritty, fast-paced tone with a forceful docu-

mentary look. But most impressive is Thomas Jane (*The Punisher*), who's riveting as a principled but confused man hurtling headlong toward self-destruction. This talented hunk should be a major star by now, and maybe *Stander*, which throws in several nude scenes of his fetching flesh, will finally do the trick.

—GM



Christian Bale spreads himself too thin in *The Machinist*

talent. Robert Cray is OK, and even Steven Tyler of Aerosmith does a credible "I'm Your King Bee." But what on earth are Natalie Cole, Macy Gray (doing a wretched "Hound Dog") and David Johansen doing here?

No matter. Cray and the exceptional Shemekia Copeland's blistering take on "I Pity the Fool," Mavis Staples' riveting contralto on "See That My Grave Is Kept

eating out eating out eating out eating out

**GENIES CAFE**  
DINNER 5:30 - MIDNIGHT  
MON - SAT

WEDNESDAY  
SPECIAL WINE NIGHT

1101 SE DIVISION  
503-445-9777

**Russell Street**  
BAR·B·QUE

Take Out  
Large Group Space  
Veggie Friendly  
Plenty of Parking  
Outdoor Patio

325 NE Russell St  
503.528.8224  
russellstreetbbq.com

**JOHN street cafe**

8338 N. LOMBARO  
503-247-1066

**NEW FALL MENU**

**equinox**  
RESTAURANT AND BAR

Planning a holiday party?  
We cater anytime,  
any location.

830 N Shaver 503-460-3333  
Just east of the corner of Mississippi and Shaver  
Open: Wed.-Sun. 5pm;  
Breakfast/Lunch: Sat.-Sun. 9am-2pm

Italian Bistro • Classic Pastas

**PASTINI PASTARIA**

DINE IN-TAKE OUT  
CATERING  
WEEKDAY LUNCH DELIVERY

PASTAS  
SALADS  
SANDWICHES  
DESSERTS  
BEER  
WINE  
COCKTAILS

LUNCH • DINNER

**NOW IN 3 LOCATIONS!**

PASTINI NE  
1426 NE BROADWAY  
(503) 288-4300  
(NEAR LLOYD CENTER)

PASTINI NW  
1506 NW 23RD AVE. AT QUIMBY  
(503) 595-1205  
(NEAR STREETCAR)

WWW.PASTINI.BIZ

LOOK FOR THE  
NEW PASTINI  
OPENING AT  
S.E. DIVISION & 20<sup>TH</sup>  
ON NOVEMBER 22<sup>ND</sup>  
(503) 595-6400