

film

Caché

Michael Haneke (*The Piano Teacher*) won the Best Director prize at the 2005 Cannes Film Festival for this tense and shocking film about a sophisticated Parisian couple (Juliette Binoche and Daniel Auteuil) whose tranquillity bites the dust when they begin receiving psychotic drawings and eerie videotapes filmed from outside their apartment. The two leads deliver masterful performances, bringing their characters from a simmer to a boil as the ugly intrigue escalates. **A**

—Stephen Blair

Look Both Ways

This quirky and disturbing Australian feature ranks with *Harold and Maude* as one of the most morbid comedies ever made. In animation sequences, an artist pictures herself being devoured by sharks and getting shot to death by masked intruders. Her new boyfriend, a photographer with testicular cancer, also sees death and decay all around him. Strong performances and imaginative visuals offset the film's tireless—and eventually tiresome—obsession with disaster. Plays 7:15 p.m. Feb. 10 at Guild Theatre as part of the Portland International Film Festival. **B**

—SB

Match Point

Woody Allen's latest is a heck of a lot better than recent swill like *Hollywood Ending*, but it's not the return to form that many critics have made it out to be. Jonathan Rhys Meyers plays a former

tennis star whose life spins out of control when he cooks up a steamy affair with a young American played by Scarlett Johansson. The London setting is a nice change of pace from Allen's trademark Greenwich Village locations. But the lead characters are irredeemably dull, even when they're having risqué sex and plotting nefarious acts of violence. **C+**

—SB

20 Centimeters

Cinematically speaking, this is the dawning of the age of transsexuals.

While *Transamerica* is getting rave reviews for its insightful depiction of a male-to-female transsexual, this year's Portland International Film Festival offers an outrageous take on this theme in the sassy Spanish entry *20 Centimeters*. Like the films of bad boy auteur Pedro Almodóvar, it's subversive, raunchy and visually dazzling. This film has nothing on, say, *All About My Mother*, but writer and director Ramón Salazar one-ups Almodóvar's antics by adding catchy and bizarre musical vignettes.

A trio of women sing "True Blue" while scantily clad hunks simulate oral sex with barbecue foods.



20 Centimeters plays 9 p.m. Feb. 11 and 7:45 p.m. Feb. 12 at Guild Theatre.

A lady vampire gets struck by lightning as she levitates. People sing and dance in the operating room before a sexual reassignment surgery.

Marieta, the main character, has a couple of big problems on her hands. For starters, she packs a 20-centimeter (that's more than 8 inches) penis that she wants to get rid of, but she can't afford the surgery. She also has narcolepsy, causing her to fall asleep at inopportune times and drift into musical reveries.

As she serves out her sentence in gender limbo, she has the good fortune to fall for a gorgeous guy who happens to love sucking cock and taking it up the ass. But therein lies the rub: Marieta wants to be loved for her vagina-to-be, not the prodigious peter she doesn't even want.

Marieta is not a particularly likable character, and the picture falls flat at times because it becomes increasingly difficult to give a damn about her fate.

It's unclear what—other than sex and MTV—goes on in her mind. Perhaps this is Salazar's intention, but it makes for pretty unrewarding viewing in the long run.

Interestingly, the heart of the movie beats in the supporting characters, the misfits and malcontents who surround Marieta. Almodóvar veteran Rossy de Palma brings a welcome sense of melancholy to the film when she discusses the downside of transsexuality, and there's a heartbreaking dwarf character who can't play the cello because he's not big enough.

In *20 Centimeters*, there's just no escaping the cliché that size really does matter. **B+**

—SB

The Untold Story of Emmett Louis Till

Some films document history; this film makes it! Kevin Beauchamp's extraordinary documentary is the culmination of a 10-year probe into the murder of a black 14-year-old who whistled at a white woman while visiting relatives in August 1955 in Mississippi. His killers were acquitted by an all-white, all-male jury. In September 2005 the U.S. Senate passed the Till Bill, forming a new unit within the Justice Department to probe old civil rights cases. The investigation is still open; 50 years later, the findings might lead to indictments and prosecution. Opens Feb. 3 at Hollywood Theatre. **A**

—Yvonne P. Behrens **JO**

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