

film

Continued from Page 39

director who reflects on his life and wants to reconnect with a son he hasn't seen for 30 years. Wouldn't we all like the opportunity to rewrite something about our lives? *Illusion* takes that idea to a new level. Opens Feb. 24 at Hollywood Theatre. **B+**

—YPB

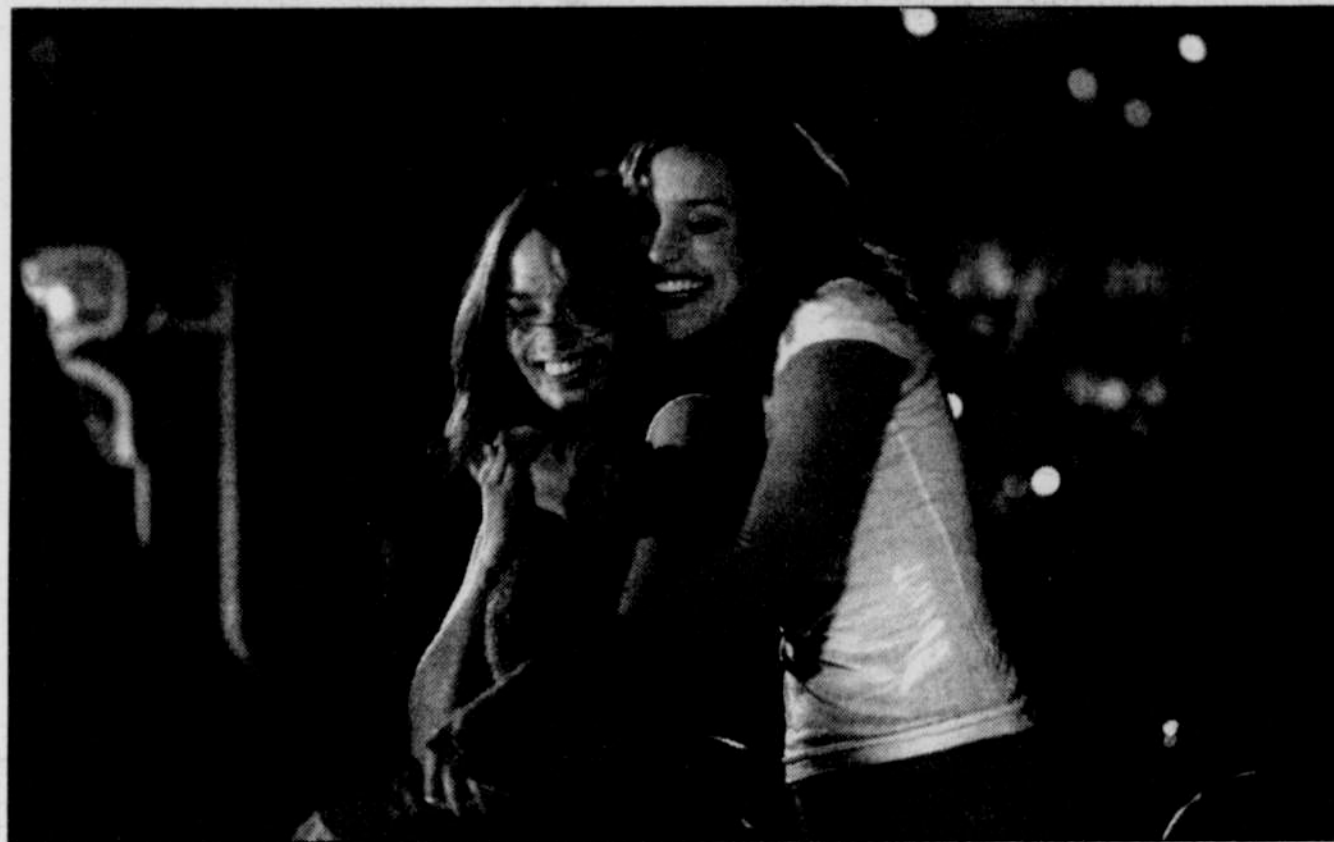
The Keeper: The Legend of Omar Khayyam

Iranian-American filmmaker Kayvan Mashayekh takes us on an incredible visual journey between past and present in this wonderful tale of love and friendship. Filmed in three continents and five cities, *The Keeper* focuses on Kamran, a 12-year-old whose dying brother tells him a story that has been passed down in their family for generations—about their ancestor Omar Khayyam (an 11th century mathematician, astronomer and poet of Persia) and Hassan Sabbah (the original creator of the sect of Assassins) and their mutual love for a beautiful woman that separates them from their eternal bond of friendship. It will now be Kamran's responsibility to keep the story alive for future generations. Opens Feb. 24 at Hollywood Theatre. **A**

—YPB

Imagine Me & You

You know your marriage is doomed when you fall in love with a complete stranger at your wedding.



A newlywed (Piper Perabo, right) blossoms with a florist (Lena Headey) in *Imagine Me & You*.

In the new British romantic comedy *Imagine Me & You*, this scenario happens to Rachel, a beautiful young woman who gets thrown for the loop of her life when she locks gazes with a hot florist named Luce. Innocent flirtation leads to some serious home wrecking, but rest assured that true love wins out in a fairy tale finish.

Writer and director Ol Parker has fashioned an amiable, highly entertaining comedy filled with strong performances and zippy one-liners. And it's a terrific date movie, particularly for lesbians seeking to catch some of the contagious romantic sparks that fly onscreen. Keep in mind that the make-out

sessions between Rachel and Luce are short, and there's no hot and heavy lesbian sex to speak of. At least the kissing is sensual and intense while it lasts.

Imagine Me & You will put a smile on your face, but leave your hopes for daring entertainment at the door. Parker has a great ear for dialogue, but he drenches his script with clichés, unlikely coincidences and totally predictable plot developments. And for every edgy insult uttered, there's a cornball scene involving a precocious kid or folks in their 60s doing their darndest to stay hip.

American actress Piper Perabo (*Coyote Ugly*) adopts a convincing English accent to play Rachel,

the sexually perplexed newlywed who pursues a friendship and, ultimately, an amorous liaison with Luce (Lena Headey). Neither actress reinvents the wheel, but they're convincing and appealing, and Headey's features conveniently allow us to see what Keira Knightly will look like in 10 years.

Debonair actor Matthew Goode, who also appears in Woody Allen's *Match Point*, lends terrific support as Rachel's cuckolded husband, Heck. His perfect comic timing makes his scenes sing.

You've seen this all before. But it still feels like we're getting somewhere when we get to see two gals sucking face at the local multiplex. **B**

—SB

Tristram Shandy: A Cock and Bull Story

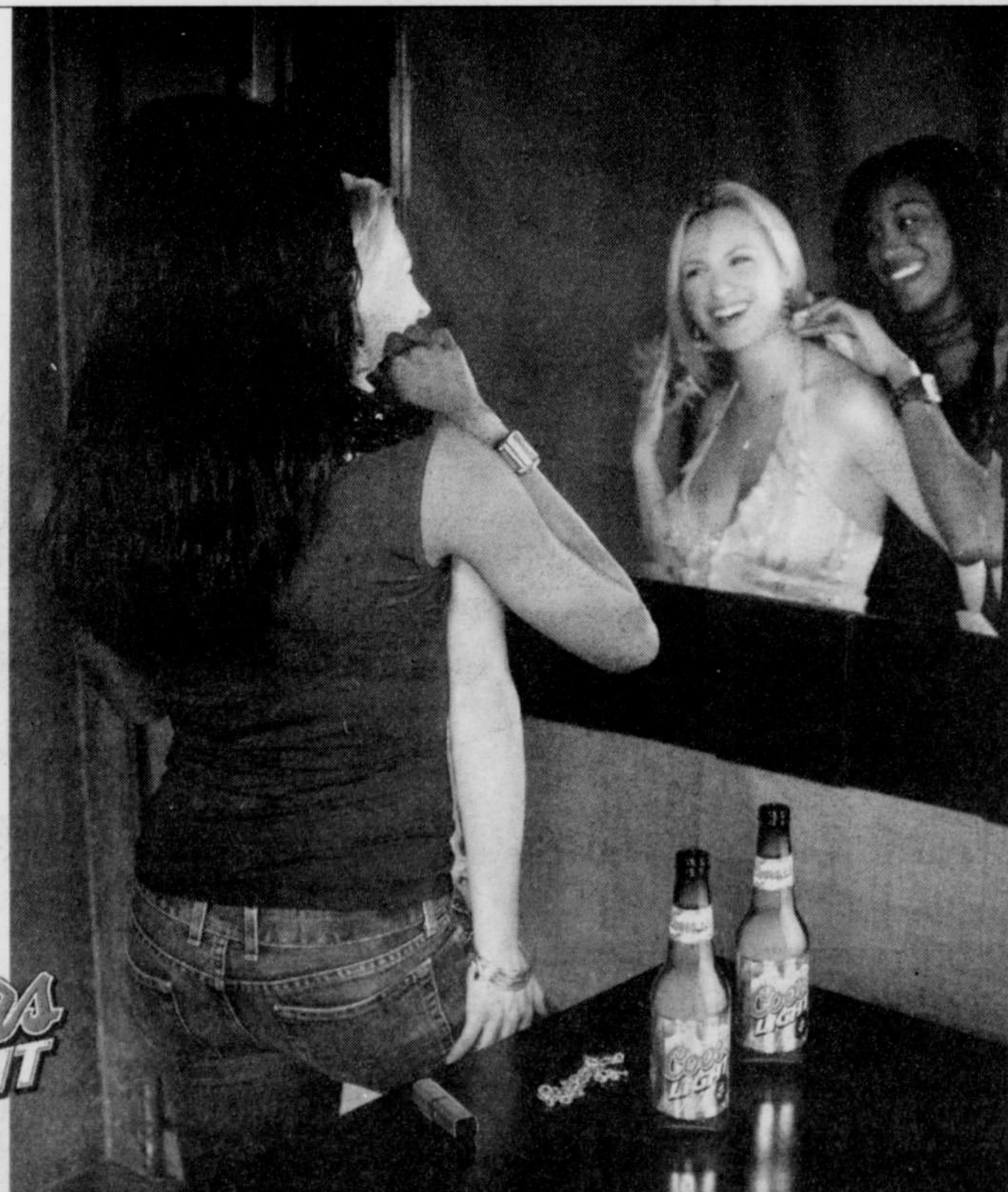
Much less an adaptation of Laurence Sterne's 18th century novel than an encapsulation of its self-referential spirit, Michael Winterbottom's (24 Hour Party People) film plays like *The Office* set in the low-budget, British film world. Most of it consists of behind-the-scenes "documentary" footage of the embattled shoot of a *Tristram Shandy* film, where general haplessness, self-delusion and petty egotism (especially that of star Steve Coogan, who sends himself up hilariously) run rampant. As "literary adaptations" go, this one's decidedly more for the BBC America crowd than the PBS audience; like Sterne's novel, it cheerfully, thoroughly undermines its pretensions in a successful quest for laughs. Opens Feb. 17 at Cinema 21. **B+**

—Christopher McQuain 10

Now's the Time. [7:15 p.m.]

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