

film

Black Sheep

Killer mutant sheep? You'd better believe it. This New Zealand horror comedy, featuring creature effects by *Lord of the Rings* studio Weta, combines broad cultural satire with a truckload of horror movie clichés, including dodgy acting, empty shocks, a really awful script and characters so annoying that you can't wait for them to die. Unfortunately, the laughs are few and far between, things take forever to get going, and much of *Black Sheep's* sense of humor errs on the side of subtlety and cleverness, without enough really good jokes to keep things moving. Rent *Dead Alive* instead. Opens July 20 at Hollywood Theatre. **C-**

—Jemiah Jefferson

Broken English

This romantic comedy finally gives Parker Posey a chance to show all her talent. She plays neurotic 30-something Nora Wilder, who lives in Manhattan and is looking for Mr. Right. Her encounters with different men are funny and sometimes sad, until she finally meets a French man and follows him to Paris. This story has been told more than once, but writer/director Zoe Cassavetes is able to show it in a different light, and she definitely displays the talent of her parents. (Her real-life mother, Gena Rowlands, appears briefly as Nora's mother.) Opens July 27 at Living Room Theaters. **B**

—Yvonne P. Behrens

Hairspray

"If this doesn't make you smile, your skin's too tight," says a deadpan Christopher Walken to campy and vampy Michelle Pfeiffer, an apt description of this film adaptation of the 2002 Broadway musical hit. While not as weird as John Waters' original 1988 classic, choreographer/director Adam Shankman's snappy version boasts an appealing cast of teens, lots of boppy numbers and plenty of laughs, all presented with an ebullient good will that leaps off the screen.

Of course, if the rumors about the sexual orientations of Queen Latifah and John Travolta are true, it's odd to see them fronting a film that criticizes those who put career ambitions before the cause of civil rights. But hey, the movie's frigg' adorable, and watching a sour-faced Allison Janney throw holy water on Amanda Bynes and shout, "Devil child! Devil child!" is worth the price of admission alone. **A**

—Floyd Sklaver

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix

Being a teenager sucks, even when you're a wizard—and Harry Potter's got it even worse than usual in this fifth installment of the popular series. *Order of the Phoenix* shifts its focus away from sports and school activities for interpersonal moments and biting social satire—as Harry



Kevin James (left) pretends to marry Adam Sandler in *I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry*.

matures, so do the films, in both tone and content. Fans of the book might grumble at dropped storylines and plot tweaks, but as a film, *Phoenix* is intelligent, touching and fun, and the cast is stellar. Nonetheless, this is probably not the place to start for Potter neophytes. **A-**

—JJ

I Have Never Forgotten You: The Life and Legacy of Simon Wiesenthal

The Long Way Home director Richard Trank once again has made an award-worthy documentary, the comprehensive story of Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal. Narrated by Nicole Kidman, the touching film features wonderful interviews and well-chosen archival footage and strikes a good balance between Wiesenthal's private and professional lives, from surviving the Holocaust to what his legacy is today. A must-see for everybody interested in history. Opens July 21 at Hollywood Theatre. **A+**

—YPB

I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry

I approached this movie with the same trepidation as many viewers, but for different reasons: they, because it's a gay movie; me, because it's an Adam Sandler movie. Sitting in a theater for two hours with public morons waiting for fart jokes (one of which comes in the first five minutes) is not my idea

of fun, especially for a movie that finds two New York fire fighters (Sandler and *The King of Queens'* Kevin James) pretending to be gay to get domestic partner benefits. Visions of C. Thomas Howell donning blackface in *Soul Man* danced in my head.

Thankfully, the film is often funny, even as it slams home messages of tolerance with the subtlety of a hot pink jackhammer. Bear-ish James is cute and acts solidly; Sandler learns the proper lessons; and Ving Rhames and James' tap-dancing son steal every scene they're in. Although it appears that concentrated nellyness has been poured into every gay man's shampoo and that lesbians only come in the flavor of "hot," at least the film is funnier than any 10 episodes of *Will & Grace*. **B-**

—Andy Mangels

Lady Chatterley

Going to see this film is like ordering a steak and being served a cup of tea. Then again, this is the judgment of someone who used to stay up late and watch naughty film versions of D.H. Lawrence novels on Cinemax after my aunt was asleep. To its credit, this French cinematic interpretation of an early, less sensational version of the novel that became *Lady Chatterley's Lover* refuses to pander to our lowbrow Americanized lusts. Unfortunately, it does so by presenting a world difficult to relate to today, filled with physically unattractive and artistically two-dimensional people, which runs about an hour too long. Opens July 20 at Cinema 21. **B-**

—Tony LeTigre

Night of Lust

A "B" grade is probably generous for this recently rediscovered, and delightfully campy, French noir thriller from 1962, which features a soundtrack by Chet Baker considered a rare treasure by vintage jazz fans. The film's distributor proudly proclaims its past status as "Banned Over Half the World!", but artistically it wouldn't last two rounds in the ring with Orson Welles' equally controversial, and recently reprised, *Touch of Evil*, first released in truncated form in the United States in 1958. But check your critical faculties at the door and enjoy *Night of Lust* for what it is: the exact cinematic equivalent of those dime-store pulp novels that are such a hilarious and indelible part of our nation's history. Plays July 20 to 23 at Clinton Street Theater. **B**

—TL

Talk to Me

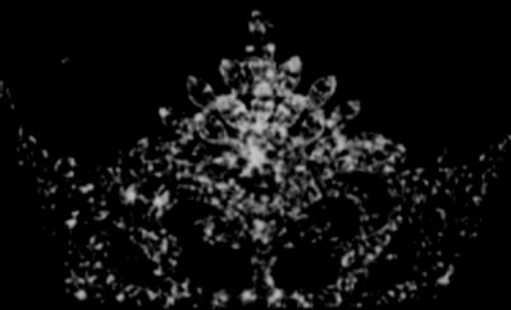
After playing Clarice Starling's FBI buddy in *The Silence of the Lambs*, Kasi Lemmons directed the swamp saga *Eve's Bayou* and the critically panned *The Caveman's Valentine*. Her new film is an alternately gripping and trite docudrama about Petey Greene (Don Cheadle), an ex-con who became a popular and controversial radio DJ in Washington, D.C., at the height of the civil rights movement. Cheadle's delivers a virtuoso performance, and Chiwetel Ejiofor aces the less flashy but equally complex role of Green's mentor, Dewey Hughes. Despite great casting and a terrific R & B soundtrack, the hokey ending and lapses into sitcom schlock prove that Lemmons still has plenty of room for improvement. Opens July 27. **B**

—Stephen Blair (10)



John Travolta does drag with Nikki Blonsky in *Hairspray*.

La Femme Magnifique International Pageant Sunday September 2, 2007



Oregon Convention Center
Portland Ballroom
777 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

For more information call
Darcelle XV Showplace
503-222-5338

knowing
makes a difference

test for HIV
if you like to play

(& get results while you wait
if your partner's positive or you're
into man-on-man action)

Always confidential
Portland • 503.988.3775
FREE TEST with ad