

# film

## The Brave One

Hot on the heels of *Panic Room* and *Flightplan*, Jodie Foster plays yet another dykey straight woman in distress, this time resorting to laughable histrionics that merit a Razzie. You'd think that innovative director Neil Jordan (*The Crying Game*) could pick up the slack, but this is his most muddled effort since *In Dreams*. The film's only redeeming feature is the droll repartee between Terrence Howard and Nicky Katt, who play the cops investigating Foster's vigilante killing spree. **D**  
—Stephen Blair

way. (We really do not want to see him reproducing.) At a softball game, Bradley's wife, Kathryn (Selma Blair), meets lean and serene Jenny (Stana Katic). Afterward at a bar, Kathryn and Jenny are sitting right next to Bradley. The two women are so obviously smitten with one another that Harry (Morgan Freeman), who is at the same table, discerns the connection while Bradley remains clueless. Harry goes home and tells his wife (Jane Alexander) but never informs Bradley. After all, telling someone your wife is falling in love with someone else would be a tough subject for one person to bring up to



Jodie Foster goes on a vigilante killing spree in *The Brave One*.

## Deep Water

Louise Osmond and Jerry Rothwell directed this haunting British documentary about a 1968-69 around-the-world boat race. The story centers on Donald Crowhurst, an ambitious family man who becomes increasingly dishonest and delusional when his voyage fails. The filmmakers piece the tragedy together with interviews, detailed maps and Crowhurst's written records and film footage. Subtlety trumps sensationalism throughout, except for a jarringly juvenile sequence that uses cheesy horror movie effects in a failed attempt to shed light on the sailor's descent into madness. Opens Sept. 21 at Cinema 21. **A-**  
—SB

another, but when you consider the new love interest is of the same sex, and nobody involved is out, that would compound the difficulties.

Before long the hot women are carrying on an affair. Plagued by guilt for Bradley and love for Jenny, Kathryn must decide what to do. (Her dilemma is not too dissimilar from the protagonist's plight in *The Gymnast*.) Then Kathryn's birthday arrives, and somebody's misjudged, albeit cute, birthday present forces her to make a choice that will leave one person very sad for months and lovers to come. Unfortunately for filmgoers, once Kathryn makes her move, the film drops her and Jenny in order to get on with Bradley's bourgeois brouhaha.

Opening Sept. 28, *Feast of Love* concerns itself with how people are always forcing themselves to be in love when it cannot be forced. It might require work, but you can never cram it into your lifestyle—even us hip Portlanders. Unfortunately, the film never lets the characters discover this. Instead, it superficially allows supernatural hands to interfere, offering laziness and fantasy as alternatives to diligence and reality. **D**  
—John Esther

## Eastern Promises

Two years after their triumphant collaboration on *A History of Violence*, maverick director David Cronenberg and Viggo Mortensen have teamed up to concoct one of the most accomplished and brutal mob movies in recent memory. The entire cast is impeccable, with Naomi Watts as a London midwife who unwittingly entangles herself in a Russian crime syndicate. Mortensen hits a career high as the menacing yet sympathetic Nikolai, showing jaw-dropping dedication to his craft by extinguishing cigarettes on his tongue and fighting a bloody brawl in the buff. Steven Knight, an Oscar nominee for *Dirty Pretty Things*, wrote the intricate screenplay. **A**  
—SB

## Feast of Love

Shot on location in Portland, director Robert Benton's *Feast of Love* interlocks the lives of various people with an unfortunate emphasis on the less interesting ones. Greg Kinnear plays Bradley Thomas, a mild-mannered romantic running one of the umpteen gourmet coffee places in our fair city. Bradley sees love as the ideal state he is living in. Fortunately for us, Bradley's love is only going one

## Mr. Woodcock

This comedy fulfilled my expectations—because I had none. The story is simple: John Farley (Seann William Scott) returns to his hometown only to find his mother (the great Susan Sarandon) engaged to the title character (Billy Bob Thornton), a former gym teacher who terrorized him throughout high school. Mr. Woodcock used his position to pick on the weak and helpless in his classes, and Farley was his favorite. As Mr. Woodcock falls back into old habits, Farley is determined to break up this engagement. The film is predictable and only slightly funny, so I recommend you save your money and catch it on DVD. **C**  
—Yvonne P. Behrens **jo**

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