

# Summer blockbusters please extensive audience

ADAM HOLMES

Staff Reporter

As the first weeks of school pass and students face daily homework and barrages of tests, movies provide one of the best therapeutic treatments to keep sane. This year, the film industry released a number of movies that performed exceptionally well at the box office. From the "Incredible Hulk" smashing through the big screen, to "WALL-E" spreading its eco-friendly message to audiences, to "Sex & the City"...well, yeah.

The most anticipated summer film of the year "The Dark Knight" made history by breaking records left and right. Even before its release, the sequel to "Batman Begins" already had a lot of positive hype from fans and critics alike. The accidental death of Heath Ledger, who portrays the Joker, only heightened the film's popularity, as fans were eager to see if Ledger's

last performance could be his finest and overshadow Hollywood legend Jack Nicholson's interpretation.



Fans, critics, and non-fans were not disappointed.

I especially enjoyed this film, being a fan of Batman, but what was remarkable

about the film was how it was able to a wide demographic of people, regardless of whether they were comic book fans, curious intellectuals, or just regular individuals who had no idea what to expect. The film managed to stay in touch with its comic roots, but it also offered a portrayal of what the caped crusader would be like if he was a vigilante in real life.

Although all of the actors did an excellent job, Ledger stole the show with his interpretation of the Joker. Instead of doing what all the previous actors had done with that character, Ledger strayed away from the goofiness and absurdity of the character and focused more on the dark and psychotic side of him.

The camera work was excellently done, especially when director Chris Nolan used an IMAX camera on six different action scenes. This made the scenes more vivid and pulse-racing. I think it is the best Batman film to date.

So far, the movie has earned \$517,680,000 at the U.S. box office, and still remains in theaters after two months. For those waiting to watch the film in the comfort of their homes, it will be released on DVD and Blu-Ray on Dec. 8.

"Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull" sees the return of the whip wielding, fedora sporting, adventurous archaeologist 19-year absence. Aside from being slightly aged, Ford did a superb job of returning to his character and giving audiences another chance at experiencing the rush of one of his adventures.

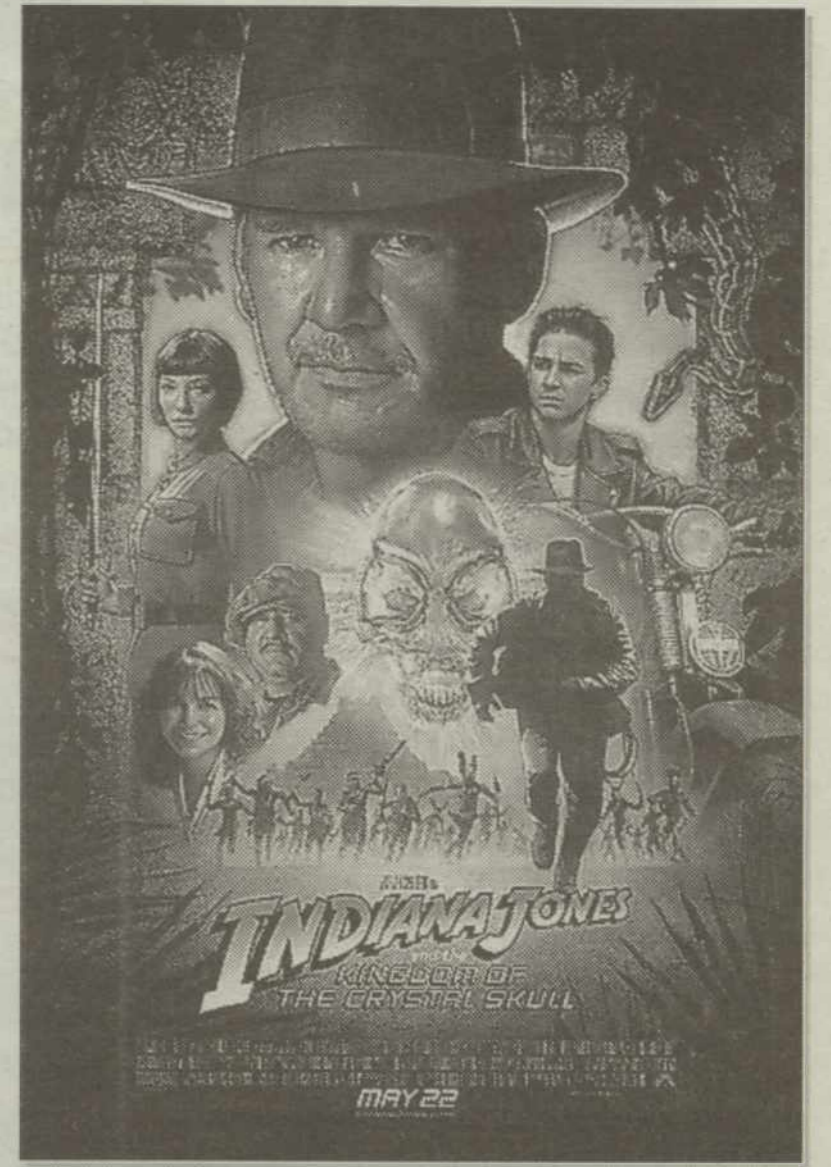
The film tried to stay true to its roots by using minimal

computer generated images and focusing on the stunt work. Although many thought this film wasn't as good as the original three, it did take an interesting turn.

The fourth Indiana Jones film did exceptionally well at the U.S. box office, becoming the second most successful film of 2008, earning \$783,266,513. The film also featured Shia LaBeouf, who starred in 2007's "Transformers", as Indiana Jones' sidekick. The film will be released on DVD and Blu-Ray on Oct. 14.

"Iron Man", another superhero flick that did well at the U.S. box office, was produced by DC Comics' (who produced "The Dark Knight") rival Marvel

industrialist Tony Stark who becomes the superhero Iron Man after a series of events.



Although most superhero films tend to be action-oriented and serious, Iron Man blended comedy into the mix. Downey Jr. offered a hilarious interpretation of Stark, who is usually portrayed as serious and tragic.

The film also boasted an all-star cast of famous actors and actresses including Gwyneth Paltrow and Jeff Bridges, as Stark's love interest and sidekick, respectively. Bridges was great as the antagonist Obidiah Stane, who rips off Stark's Iron Man design and creates a bulkier and stronger version. The film will be released on DVD and Blu-Ray on Sept. 30.

These are just three of the many summer films. This year was especially excellent for movies, and many of the films that came out will not be forgotten anytime soon.



Comics. Featuring an all-star cast and a marvelous comeback by actor Robert Downey Jr., this action-packed flick kicked off the summer movie fest with a bang.

This film features Downey Jr. as weapons

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Do you ever wonder why stunt people always say "Don't try this at home?"

Sigh...because they don't want dumb people to try doing it and end up blowing themselves up!

...But if they didn't tell us not to, we wouldn't feel so inclined to try it.

Oct. 2008  
 Sarah Lund