

# "Hunting" for movies that leave an impression

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"Good Will Hunting" has something many movies have been emphasizing for years—how to make dreams reality and give life meaning.

A good way to measure if a movie is good is to see how long it lingers in your mind. The best poetry, paintings, music, and cinema is not only seen and heard, but felt. When it leaves an impression, it is art.

"Good Will Hunting" does a good job of that with its original script, realistic characters and even more realistic setting. It all moves around the character of Will Hunting (Matt Damon), an unknown genius spending his life in manual labor in the shoddy neighborhoods of south Boston. The plot unfolds around the discovery of his genius.

Through all Will's problems, his friends and associates (including Robin Williams as psychiatrist Sean McGuire) began to see their own. They often are found reflecting on the things he says, and the life he leads. Characters become deeper and the definition and values of life more obvious. The influence of Will's character reaches past the screen.

Will accuses Sean of losing his will to live and entering a comfort zone when Sean's wife died. This is relevant to many; it echoes and reaches into the

audience's minds. The words of advice from Will's friends and mentors, telling him to use his genius and talent for something worthwhile, are equally penetrating.

"Good Will Hunting" has a powerful message and Hollywood gives us many others. Another recent example is "Titanic," with character Jack Dawson (Leonardo DeCaprio) giving sound advice on living your dreams and refusing to conform.

A few years ago, "Dead Poets' Society" portrayed Williams again sharing ideas on getting all you can out of life, through the words of old poets like Walt Whitman, Robert Frost and Henry David Thoreau. The catch phrase "carpe diem"—seize the day—was taught as not only something you read about, but more importantly experienced and lived.

These poets had a lot to say about celebrating life. Now living today in a society that does little reading and likes things easier, artists have gone to express it through cinema. Yet for us the whole idea becomes too complex or challenging to actually experience.

Cinema may often be skeptical also, but that has not stopped filmmakers from trying. In a time when many Hollywood images are dark and negative, there lies a vein of gold, movies full of inspiration and reflection.

"Forrest Gump" showed us

all that could be done in a human life (through Forrest) and all that could be wasted (through Jenny). Success can even come to someone who does not have a photographic memory or a high IQ.

"Mr. Holland's Opus" touched deeply on what influence we can have on others in our lives, even if it's just one life and even if one is only a high school music teacher. We are all important in some way to someone.

Inspiring moves exist for all ages and crowds. "Big" shows us the secret to happiness in middle age is in the "small" moments. "Fried Green Tomatoes" and "Thelma and Louise" reminded women of the importance of friendship and finding joy in the worst of situations. In the world of sports, "Chariots of Fire", "Rocky" and "Rudy" told stories of unknown people that made it big through hard work, and people that cared about them.

Each of these takes a different angle on how we can paint our life's portrait. Each touches us in a different way. They show that life can be fulfilling and important, and full of opportunities for those who are willing to work for them.

The screens are whispering in the same form that pages did long ago.

*You can be something, they say. Maybe a hero, big or small, or a pianist or author, or just happy. You can make your dreams become real.*

We all have different dreams and aspirations, and the movies cannot cater to them directly, nor push us on our way, but they can leave an impression. It is up to us to act upon it. Life does not have to be mundane and certainly should not be comfortable.

We too, like the movies, will come to an end. And like any form of art or good movie, only the greatest leave an impression.

## Good Will Hunting

**Director:** Gus Van Sant

**Starring:** Matt Damon, Robin Williams, Ben Affleck, and Minnie Driver

**Story:** The story of a young genius who has lived a rough life and finds deeper meaning through old and new friends.



Robin Williams tells Matt Damon in "Good Will Hunting" what life is really about.

# Succatash rocks the Green Onion with unique brand of funky jazz

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With so many young and talented bands starting to appear on the local music scene, it is hard to tell which groups will succeed and which will fail. But in the case of Succatash, an Oregon City septet with a penchant for funky jazz tunes, success seems inevitable.

Although Succatash has only been together for a little over one year, it is an extremely talented band with a steady flow of gigs at small clubs and restaurants.

The band consists of Clackamas student Norm Buccola on bass, Jason Thomas on lead guitar, drummer Mica Cassel, Jared Lawson flowing on the keyboard, Fred Traheel singing vocals, a trumpet player known as Caleb, and a saxophonist.

Cassel describes their sound as being "Zappa meets Bootsy Collins with a side of Weather Report." Quite a good depiction, actually. Their

music ranges from funk to jazz to blues, with many elements of fusion, swing, and bebop also apparent.

Formerly known under a different pseudonym, they had to change their title after people had trouble remembering and pronouncing it.

"Nobody could say Groovonic Jammotitis," recalls Thomas.

At a recent gig at The Green Onion in downtown Portland, they showed that no matter what their name, they could still groove. They played to a standing-room only crowd at the small Persian restaurant, and it was obvious that the audience was digging the long jams and jazzy tunes of Succatash.

The songs flowed together smoothly, with various solos adding to the overall tone of the show. Every person in the band had at least one solo to play around with, and standouts included Caleb's improvisational work on the trumpet and the guitar work of Jason Thomas. As you can imagine, The Green Onion was swinging that night.

Succatash has done many other shows, including one at Clackamas last year during the last week of May. Unfortunately, many Clackamas students don't take the time to appreciate music on campus, so they went relatively unnoticed. But there will be plenty of other opportunities to see and hear these musicians.

This Friday, Jan. 30, Succatash plans to enter the recording studio to start cutting songs for an upcoming compact disc. Hopefully, they will be able to retain the same distinctive feeling of the live shows on their record.

They also plan to do more shows at The Green Onion, with dates unconfirmed as of yet. Call Norm or Jason at 557-8672 for more information regarding dates, times, or just more info about the band.

Succatash has come a long way in the short time that they have been together, and they have the talent and sound to go much further. If you ever get the chance to hear them live, take it! No matter what your musical tastes, you will enjoy the fun and different music of Succatash.