

'Smooch' this movie away

MAGGIE JIRASEK
Editor-in Chief

"Death to Smoochy," a wild, unpredictable, dark comedy is Warner Brother's newest attraction and will change your outlook on children's TV forever. Director Danny DeVito created a piece that is everything else but a movie for children.

Starring Robin Williams, Edward Norton, Jon Stewart, Catherine Keener and Danny DeVito, "Death to Smoochy" shows what really goes on behind the scenes of children's TV programming. The movie tells the story of Rainbow Randolph, the colorful star of a children's television show, who after a bribery scandal gets replaced by a purple rhino named Smoochy (Norton). Of course, the rhino is much more handsome and suitable for the show and therefore wins the children's hearts.

Randolph is not happy with the situation at all and tries to do everything to get back to fame and destroy the oh-so-cute and puffy Smoochy. Especially after Randolph finds out that Smoochy is having an affair with his ex-girlfriend, the top-programming executive at the network, Nora. He turns into a psycho and starts plotting revenge. When the Mafia, Irish gangs, punch-drunk boxers,

dwarves and children get involved, the results can get insane to some degree, if not bloody.

Although the movie shows a sense of humor and creativity, it lacks character development. Just when you think that you can predict a certain individual's action in the movie, something totally out of context occurs and makes you wonder whether that character might have been brainwashed behind the scenes. Williams, for example, goes nuts in his role as Randolph and turns out to be a psycho 15 minutes into the movie. He is so bent on revenge that it becomes hilarious but disturbing at the same time. Towards the end, Randolph decides to be the good guy and wants to save everybody.

The movie was also very bloody at times and the language used was not the one you would use around children. Especially the character of Randolph seemed to like cussing, at times to extensive degrees. In a private screening at the Warner Brother's Studios Friday, March 1, DeVito tested his piece to a crowd of college students. Afterwards, in a question-and-answer session, he admitted that there was pressure to tone the movie down a little and that he him-



A scene from the new Warner Bros. movie "Death To Smoochy" starring Edward Norton as Smoochy, and Robin Williams as Rainbow Randolph, from Director Danny DeVito.

self went a little bit overboard, squirting the blood from a bottle off camera. DeVito also warned that this is definitely not a movie you want to bring your kids to.

If you like movies that don't

make a lot of sense and are violent in a sort of humorous way but do entertain you, then you would probably enjoy it. If you think that this comedy is a soft children's tale, then you better stay away from it. "Death to

Smoochy," rated R for language and sexual references, will be released March 29 nationwide.

To reach Maggie Jirasek e-mail bunny_97222@yahoo.com or drop by B-104.

Stuff of Dreams: form and function combine in decorative art show

ERINN LERTEN
Staff Writer

Sometimes a chair is just a chair, but at Matières de Rêves: Stuff of Dreams, currently showing at the Portland Art Museum, a chair might be Ruth Francken's "L'homme chair," inspired by the "sit-in" demonstrations of the 1960s.

And a bed might be the monumental canopied bed made for Emilie Valtresse de la Vigne, the courtesan who inspired Zola's "Nana." Throughout the ages, exceptional objects have been created that exceed the requirements of utility, the conventions of tradition, and standards of craftsmanship.

Direct from the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, situated in a wing of the Louvre Palace in Paris, Stuff of Dreams offers 100 masterpieces of French decorative art dating from the middle-ages to present. Including glass work, ceramics, jewelry and silver as well as furniture, these objects carry with them fascinating stories of the people who commissioned, collected, used or loved them.

Also in the exhibit is the clock from Marie Antoinette's bathroom in the Tuileries Palace, and the burled wood and gilt bronze ceremonial

cradle of the Duc de Bordeaux.

The Portland Art Museum, through its connections with Madame Héléne David-Weill, Président, L'Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs, was approached to work with the French museum in organizing a traveling exhibition featuring some of its most impressive works. This international exchange is curated by Penelope Hunter-Stiebel, Consulting Curator of European Art and Odile Nouvel, head of the 19th century art department at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs.

The Musée des Arts Décoratifs, widely recognized as the foremost private collection in France, has temporarily closed its galleries for renovations until 2003. Following its premiere in Portland, the exhibition can be seen from June 1 through Aug. 11 at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, and from Sept. 22 through Jan. 5 at the Birmingham Museum of Art in Alabama.

Stuff of Dreams will be on display in Portland through April 28. For ticket information call the Portland Art Museum at (503) 226-2811 or check out their website www.pam.org.

To reach Erin Lerten goawayrocks@hotmail.com or drop by B-104.

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