

Forever In a Day

Impressive changes

50 FIRST DATES: Directed by Peter Segal. Written by George Wing. Produced by Jack Giarraputo, Steve Golin, Nancy Juvonen. Executive producers Daniel Lupi, Michael Ewing, M. Jay Roach. Cinematography, Jack Green. Production design, Alan Au. Film editor, Jeff Gourson. Music, Teddy Castellucci. Music supervisor, Michael Dilbeck. Costumes, Ellen Lutter. Starring Adam Sandler and Drew Barrymore. With Rob Schneider, Sean Astin, Blake Clark, Joe Nakashima, Amy Hill, Nephi Pomaikai Brown, Dan Akroyd. Columbia Pictures, 2004. PG-13. 100 minutes.

Adam Sandler showed he could be more than a walking dick joke in Paul Thomas Anderson's *Punch Drunk Love* with co-star Emily Watson, and he exhibits the same abilities here with Drew Barrymore, but only after mind-numbing minutes of predictable adolescent goofiness, which represents a step backward for the actor. Who says Sandler's gotta satisfy his comedy fans before he gets serious with a woman? Hollywood! In the old-timey horse operas the hero had to love his horse first and his woman second, and this feels like the same kind of muddled thinking.

If the success of Sophia Coppola's bitter-sweet, comic romance *Lost in Translation* has any effect on the industry's dependence on such formulaic nonsense, it should be evident that comedy is everywhere. Comedy doesn't have to be forced. It can be carried by a shared glance, by an expression, subtly.

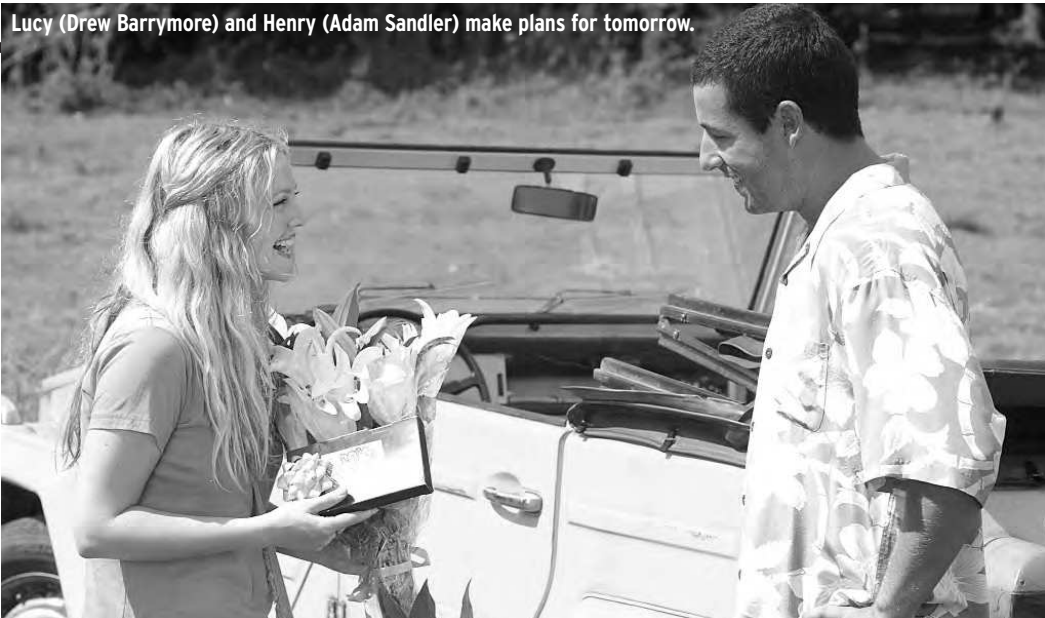
Henry Roth (Sandler) first lays eyes on

Lucy Whitmore (Barrymore) in the Hukilau Café on the Windward side of Oahu. His schooner, the Sea Serpent, failed its trial run, and he has some time on his hands. Henry is the veterinarian at Sea Life Park, on Oahu's east shore overlooking the Pacific, where he takes care of Jocko, a joke-making, trained walrus, and a pet penguin who wears a little red jacket. Henry's gender-challenged assistant, Alexa (Luisa Strus), and his wacko buddy, Ula (Rob Schneider), carry the worst of the over-the-top comedic roles.

On Lucy and Henry's first meeting, everything goes so well between them she asks him to meet her again the next morning at the café. Fortunately for Henry, his reputation as a shameless womanizer has not reached the Hukilau. But the next day when Henry returns to meet Lucy, she doesn't remember anything about him and thinks he's a freak.

Sue (Amy Hill) and Nick (Nephi Pomaikai Brown) who run the café warn Henry with various threats to stay away from Lucy, who suffered a serious head injury in a car accident. Sue tells him Lucy has a permanent brain condition that prevents her from remembering anything that has happened since that day.

Lucy (Drew Barrymore) and Henry (Adam Sandler) make plans for tomorrow.



DARREN MICHAELS, COLUMBIA PICTURES, 2003.

It takes all the skill and patience Henry can muster to win back Lucy's loving attention, but he's ready to give up his dead-end lifestyle to try. More daunting than Lucy's memory loss are the barriers erected by her father, Marlin (Blake Clark), and brother, Doug (Sean Astin), a guy whose ambitions extend no farther than his steroid-enhanced biceps. Marlin has given up his charter fishing business to take care of his daughter, and he's not about to let Henry come in and mess up the charade he and Doug replay each day.

Bear in mind that the film's real question — can Henry make Lucy fall in love with him every day? — has not even begun to be asked. I wish the filmmakers hadn't loaded up the front of the movie with so many forgettable scenes and annoying characters. But

once the set-up is done, the good stuff begins.

I'm always surprised when the jokester Sandler turns tender and sensitive, but he does it so naturally, I'm touched. While it's no stretch at all to see Barrymore become ever more loving and open as the romance with Sandler takes off, I love the way she deepens her portrayal of Lucy. That these two accomplished actors bring the half-assed first-half to a rich, meaningful conclusion is so satisfying I'm almost ready to forgive and forget.

Beyond its entertainment value, the film makes a point of reminding us there are few better ways to live your life than seeing each day as brand new. Or: Be here now, as Ram Dass says. *Fifty First Dates* is now playing at Cinema World and Cinemark. It's highly recommended. **EW**

movie clips

OPENING OR RETURNING: **Agent Cody Banks 2 Destination London:** Frankie Muniz returns as spy Cody Banks, this time he's undercover in London as a student at an elite boarding school. PG. Cinema World. Cinemark.

Big Bounce, The: Owen Wilson, Morgan Freeman, Gary Sinise and Charlie Sheen star in comedy based on Elmore Leonard novel. Directed by George Armitage. A feel-good, surf-in' movie you'll forget three feet from the theater door. PG-13. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

Blade Runner (1982): Ridley Scott's futuristic adventure set in Los Angeles stars Harrison Ford as a cynical former cop on the trail of deadly android/replicants. With Rutger Hauer, Sean Young, Darryl Hannah, Edward James Olmos. R. LateNite Bijou.

Milagro Beanfield War, The (1988): Robert Redford's film based on John Nichols' hilarious novel about political life in a small New Mexico community stars Rueben Blades, Sonia Braga. R. At 6:30 pm on 3/13 at Lorane Grange Hall. \$7 includes pre-show refreshments.

Secret Window: Psychotic (John Turturro) stalks writer (Johnny Depp), accusing him of stealing the ending to his story. David Koepp directs, story by Stephen King. Also stars Maria Bello, Timothy Hutton, Charles S. Dutton. PG-13. Cinemark. Cinema World.

Something's Gotta Give: Directed by Nancy Meyers. Harry Sanborn (Jack Nicholson) is a New York music mogul with a libido much younger than his years, while Diane Keaton is a writer with more on her mind than sex. With Amanda Peet, Frances McDormand and Keanu Reeves. 2003 Academy Award nomination for Keaton. PG-13. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

Spartan: Written and directed by David Mamet, thriller stars Val Kilmer as an unquestioning, secret ops investigator partnered with a new guy (Derek Luke). They're searching for the president's kidnapped daughter (Kristen Bell) and must evade corrupt functionaries (Ed O'Neill, William H. Macy). R. Cinemark.

Tai Chi Master, The (1993): Michelle Yeoh and Jet Lee band together to defeat the bad guys in this film plumped up with many startling fights, choreographed by film's director Woo-ping Yuen, who did the *Matrix* films. LateNite Bijou.

Taking Lives: All-star cast includes Angelina Jolie, Ethan Hawke, Keifer Sutherland, Olivier Martinez and Jean-Hughes Anglade. Directed by D.J. Caruso, this thriller is about a serial killer who steals his victims' identities. R. Sneak at 7:30 pm on 3/13. Cinemark.

Teacher's Pet: Talking dog Spot wants to become a "real boy," and mad scientist Ivan Krank, tries to make it possible.

Nathan Lane is Spot's voice, Kelsey Grammer is Krank's. PG. Movies 12.

Touching the Void: In 1985, two daring young British climbers scaled the unclimbed west face of 20,853 foot Siula Grande in the Peruvian Andes. Coming down, a succession of events made their survival unlikely. Director Kevin Macdonald's brilliant and touching mixed documentary and re-enactment adventure film is the result. Highest recommendations. NR. Bijou. **See review this issue.**

War and Peace Part 2 (1967): Sergei Bondarchuk directs classic film version of Tolstoy's epic novel, entirely shot in Russia at cost of \$100 million. Music by Nino Rota. 1968 Academy Award Best Foreign Film. At 8:15 on 3/15 in 115 Pacific Hall, UO campus. In Russian, English subtitles. Free.

Films open the Friday following EW publication date unless otherwise noted. See archived reviews at www.eugeneweekly.com

CONTINUING: **Along Came Polly:** Ben Stiller plays Reuben, a hapless husband whose bride dumps him. Then he meets up with a childhood friend, Polly (Jennifer Aniston). Also stars Philip Seymour Hoffman, Hank Azaria, Bryan Brown and Alec Baldwin. John Hamburg directs. PG-13. Movies 12. **Bad Santa:** Directed by Terry Zwigoff. The story of two con men who go on a road trip to malls dressed as Santa and his elf who rob the malls after hours. An 8-year-old teaches them the true meaning of Christmas. Right! Stars Billy Bob Thornton, Bernie Mac, Lauren Graham, John Ritter. R. Movies 12.

Brother Bear: Disney tale of young man who is transformed into a bear and his adventures in the great Northwest. Academy Award nom for animated feature film. G. Movies 12.

Butterfly Effect: The trailer is about a young man (Ashton Kutcher) who time travels back to the past to fix the broken lives of a childhood girlfriend (Amy Smart) and his friends, Lenny (Eldoen Henson) and Tommy (William Lee Scott). R. Movies 12.

Catch That Kid: Bart Freundlich directs this caper film about three smart kids on a mission without permission. Stars Kristen Stewart, Corbin Bleu, Max Thieriot, Jennifer Beals, Sam Robards, John Carroll Lynch and James LeGros. PG. Movies 12.

Cheaper by the Dozen: Steve Martin and Bonnie Hunt play the parents of 12 children, including Piper Perabo, Hilary Duff and Tom Welling. Directed by Shawn Levy. PG. Movies 12.

Cold Mountain: Anthony Minghella's adaptation of Charles Frazier's Civil War

best-seller stars Jude Law as a wounded Southern soldier who walks 1000 miles to get home. Nicole Kidman is his pre-war sweetheart, and Renee Zellweger teaches her to farm and survive. Very highest recommendations. Academy Award to Rene Zellweger. Nominations: Jude Law, actor; cinematography; original score; two original songs; film editing. R. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen: Stars Lindsay Lohan (*Freaky Friday*). Welsh director Sara Sugarman's her first movie. PG. Cinemark.

Fifty First Dates: Drew Barrymore and Adam Sandler in a romance with a catch: she has no short-term memory recall, so she forgets him every night. Also stars Rob Schneider, Sean Astin and Dan Aykroyd. Directed by Peter Segal. PG-13. Cinemark. Cinema World. **See review this issue.**

Fog of War: 2003 Academy Award-winning documentary feature directed by Errol Morris, who said, "Forty years ago, this country went down a rabbit hole in Vietnam. Millions died. I fear we're going down the rabbit hole once again." About Robert McNamara, defense secretary under Kennedy and Johnson; architect of the Vietnam War. Highest recommendations. PG-13. Bijou. **Online archives.**

Girl With the Pearl Earring: Scarlett Johansson and Colin Firth give consummate performances in this underrated, lovely film about Vermeer and the model for his famous, mysterious painting. Very highest recommendations. 2003 Academy Award nominations for cinematography, art direction, costume design. PG-13. Cinema World. **Online archives.**

Haunted Mansion: Eddie Murphy stars in

Rob Minkoff's (*Stuart Little*) ghost comedy, with Jennifer Tilly, Don Knotts, Terence Stamp PG. Movies 12.

Hidalgo: Based on autobiography of distance rider Frank T. Hopkins, played by Viggo Mortensen, this epic action-adventure takes place during a 3,000 mile survival race across the Arabian Desert in 1890. PG-13. Cinema World. Cinemark.

Last Samurai, The: Edward Zwick directs this action-adventure starring Tom Cruise as a bitter Civil War vet in China to train emperor's troops to defeat samurais. Captured by warrior Katsumoto (Ken Watanabe), he learns Samurai traditions and code of honor. 2003 Academy Award noms: Watanabe, Supporting Actor; art direction; sound mixing; costume design. R. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

Lord of the Rings: Return of the King: Peter Jackson's completes stunning work stars Elijah Wood, Viggo Mortensen, Sean Astin, Ian McKellen, Billy Boyd, Orlando Bloom, Liv Tyler, Cate Blanchett. Frodo and Sam make it to Mount Doom as Aragorn leads the warriors of Middle Earth in the final battle against Sauron. 2003 Academy Award sweeps for Best Picture; Director, Peter Jackson; adapted screenplay; art direction; sound mixing; original score; original song; costume design; film editing; makeup; and visual effects. Very highest recommendations. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

Master and Commander The Far side of the World: Peter Weir brings Patrick O'Brian's best-selling nautical adventures during the Napoleonic era to the screen, with Russell Crowe as Captain Jack Aubrey and Paul Bettany as Dr. Stephen Maturin, ship surgeon and naturalist. Very highest recommendations. Academy Awards for

cinematography and sound editing; nominations for picture; director; art direction; sound mixing; costume design; film editing; makeup; visual effects. PG-13. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

Mona Lisa Smile: Julia Roberts is an idealistic teacher and nonconformist at Wellesley in the 1950s. Julia Stiles, Kirsten Dunst and Maggie Gyllenhaal are her students. Mike Newell directs. PG-13. Movies 12. **Monster:** Patty Jenkins' feature film about real-life killer Aileen Wuornos stars Charlize Theron, who not only captures Wuornos's fragile hold on human decency but also show that her tough exterior is the only buffer she has between her marginal life and an uncaring world. Co-stars Christina Ricci. Hard-to-watch violence. 2003 Academy Award for Theron, Best Actress. R. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

Mystic River: Clint Eastwood directs Brian Helgeland's adaptation, based on Dennis Lehane's dramatic tragedy. Stars Sean Penn, Tim Robbins, Kevin Bacon, Laurence Fishburne, Marcia Gay Harden, Laura Linney and Emmy Rossum. Very highest recommendations. 2003 Academy Awards for Penn and Robbins; nominations for picture, supporting actress Marcia Gay Harden; director Eastwood; adapted screenplay, Helgeland. R. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

Passion of Christ, The (2004): Mel Gibson film opens amid charges (denied) of anti-Semitism. A.O. Scott of *The New York Times* writes, "The Passion of the Christ" is so relentlessly focused on the savagery of Jesus' final hours that this film seems to arise less from love than from wrath, and to succeed more in assaulting the spirit than in uplifting it." Others cite

the film's graphic torture as being unwatchable. R. Cinemark. Cinema World.

Paycheck: Based on a Philip K. Dick sci-fi short story and directed by John Woo, film stars Ben Affleck, Uma Thurman Aaron Eckhart, Paul Giamatti, Colm Feore, Michael C. Hall. PG-13. Movies 12.

Peter Pan: Directed by P.J. Hogan, movie stars Jason Isaacs, Jeremy Sumpter, Richard Briers, Olivia Williams, Lyn Redgrave, Ludvine Sagnier and Rachel Hurd-Wood. PG. Movies 12.

School of Rock: Substitute teacher and wild guitarist Jack Black turns elementary musical prodigies into a high-voltage rock band. Directed by Richard Linklater, it also stars Joan Cusack, Mike White and Sarah Silverman. PG-13. Movies 12.

Starsky and Hutch: Ben Stiller is uptight Starsky, while Owen Wilson is laid back Ken "Hutch" Hutchinson in this remake of TV's undercover crime-fighters. With Vince Vaughn, Snoop Dogg, Juliette Lewis. PG-13. Cinemark. Cinema World.

Triplets of Belleville: Sylvain Chomet's animated tale features whimsical, skewed architecture looming over bizarre figures in this strange, wonderful work. A don't-miss gem from 2003, the film's Academy Award noms include Best Animated Film and original song. Very highest recommendations PG-13. Bijou. **Online archives.**

Twisted: Philip Kaufman directs Ashley Judd, Samuel L. Jackson and Andy Garcia in a policier involving a female serial killer. R. Cinemark.

**Bijou Art Cinemas (686-2458)
Cinema World 8 (342-6536)
Cinemark 17 (746-5202)c
Movies 12 (741-1231)**

Video Clips

NEW RELEASES ON VIDEO

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The Chaplin Collection: Volume 2: Digitally re-mastered from restored vault elements. Includes "The Kid," "The Circus," "City Lights," "A King in New York and A Woman of Paris" and "Chaplin Revue" in two-disc sets; "Monsieur Verdoux," a single disc; or all six titles in 12-disc gift set. Includes feature-length documentary on Chaplin by critic Richard Schickel. NR.

Commitments, The (1991): Dublin working-class musicians form a rhythm and blues band. Alan Parker directs Robert Arkins, Colm Meany, Andrew Strong, Johnny Murphy. Ending is wonderfully non-Hollywood. Loads of DVD extras. R.

Demonlover (2003): Olivier Assayas directs this highly acclaimed film the *Village Voice's* Dennis Lim says is "Designed to seduce and repel." Starrs Connie Nielson, Gina Gershon, Chloe Sevigny and Charles Berling. R.

Schindler's List (1993): Steven Spielberg directs the true story of a German industrialist and Nazi Party member (Liam Neeson) who exploits the Jews as free labor in his factories and then save the lives of 1100 during the Holocaust. Schindler became the only Nazi Party member to be buried in Jerusalem's Mt. Zion Cemetery. Co-stars Ben Kingsley, Ralph Fiennes, Caroline Goodall, Jonathan Sagall, Embeth Davidz. Extras include 77-minute documentary and more. R.

Veronica Guerin (2003): Extraordinary film based on courageous Dublin journalist (Cate Blanchett), this treacherous game of cat-and-mouse set in the mid-1990s is directed by Joel Schumacher. Also Gerard McSorley, Ciaran Hinds and Brenda Fricker. Highly recommended. R. **Online archives.**

Next week: Beyond Borders, Dirty Pretty Things, Magdalene Sisters, Shattered Glass, The Singing Detective, Something's Gotta Give.