

Cool Off With Your Brain Off III:

REVENGE OF CRAP MOVIES by Molly Templeton

Wait, wait. Hold on a second. It's not even really summer — not *really* — and yet, many of the season's Biggest! Effing! Movies! are already in theaters. It's the May thing; like the Oscars, which got bumped from March to February a few years ago, summer movies now come in May. No, this isn't news. But it's still annoying, and it emphasizes the worst of the cinematic year: *August*. August is the time of terror for movie fans (except, of course, when some slow-to-head-west art films turn up at the Bijou — ah, heavenly reprieve).

But that, for the moment, is hardly the point. The point is cooling off mindlessly. Possibly unconsciously; who hasn't, in the worst heat, considered paying for anything that would grant them two hours of undisturbed, air-conditioned bliss, even if those hours were spent, say, napping? When you get that desperate this year, here's what you'll be experiencing — some experiences, naturally, sound quite a bit worse than others.

SPACE CHIMPS Doesn't the title just say it all? Andy Samberg (you remember the "Lazy Sunday" skit, no?)'s chimp character gets blasted into space and through a black hole and then there are adventures. Also the saving of alien planets. A cross-promotion with Dole involves 100 million collectable stickers on bananas. Oh, dear. Make this a double feature with **FLY ME TO THE MOON**, which involves — oh, guess! GUESS! — yes, *flies*. That go to the moon. They sneak onto Apollo 11. Hijinks ensue.



MISS CONCEPTION Heather Graham stars as a woman whose womb — oh, this is bad — skips a beat (what?) whenever she sees a child. But look! On the horizon! *Menopause*! (Let us note here that Graham's character is "30-something." Because we all need to be freaked out about our babymaking abilities and make lots of babies, like, right now. Get started! What are you waiting for?)

BEVERLY HILLS CHIHUAHUA While staring, drop-jawed, at the screen as the horror that is this preview unspooled before *Prince Caspian*, I thought, "The people involved in this film must be at least just a little tiny bit evil. Or very desperate. There's just no way you *want* a movie called *Beverly Hills Chihuahua* on your resume, especially when it looks like an extended Taco Bell commercial." Run away from the theater, dog lovers. Run.

ALL THE BOYS LOVE MANDY LANE *She's All That* with murder.

MIRRORS Not the kind of which evil stepmothers ask questions, either. No, these are eeeeevil mirrors. And Kiefer Sutherland's going to find out what's behind them. Or in them. Or whatever. (Yes, it's a remake of an Asian

horror film. By which I mean no disrespect to the makers of the original film, and plenty to the people who just keep recycling things. That is not the good kind of recycling.)

THE ROCKER If you were to mistake this film — in which Rainn Wilson plays a failed hair metal drummer who, 20 years later, gets another chance to rock out — for a sequel to the Marky Mark flick *Rock Star*, you wouldn't be alone.

And then there are two movies that have a certain allure, despite sounding, on paper, less than super. Paul W.S. Anderson (*Event Horizon*, *Mortal Kombat*) remakes 1975's cult flick *Death Race 2000* as simply **DEATH RACE**; it stars Jason Statham as a falsely-accused ex-con forced to take part in a vicious bloody spectacle. It also stars Joan Allen and Ian McShane, which, well, gives it some cachet, for sure. And on the other hand we have Mathieu Kassovitz's **BABYLON A.D.**, which shares a name with the hair metal band that did the theme song for *Robocop 2* (seriously. I don't just make this stuff up. I swear). This one gives us Vin Diesel as a mercenary fighting his way across a post-apocalyptic landscape to deliver a mysterious package (no, it's not actually another *Transporter* movie). Kassovitz is also an actor (*Munich*, *Amelie*) and he directed the fantastic *Hate*, so I hold out hope. But not too much of it.



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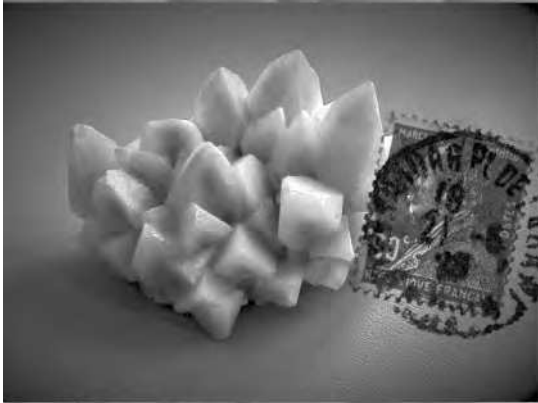
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