movie clips

OPENING OR RETURNING:

ArchaeologyFest Film Series: Best of 2008: This benefit for the Archaeology Channel begins with *Hidden Worlds: Underground Rome* and *The Wild West Uncovered: The Rise and Fall of Virginia City* at 7:30 pm Friday, Aug. 8, and continues with *Unlocking Pharaoh's Cellar* and *Chocolate: Pathway to the Gods* at 7:30 pm Saturday, Aug. 9, at DIVA. $6 per screening; series continues next weekend.

Children of Huang Shi, The: Director Roger Spottiswoode (*Tomorrow Never Dies*, though don't hold that against him) offers a sweet and standard do-gooder film that explores the story of George Hogg (Jonathan Rhys Meyers), who took care of 60-odd Chinese children in the late 1930s, eventually leading them on a long march to safety. With Chow Yun-Fat, Michelle Yeoh and Radha Mitchell. R. 125 min. Bijou. **See review this issue**.

Iron Giant, The: Director Brad Bird's (*The Incredibles*, *Ratatouille*) fantastic and often unjustly overlooked story of a boy and his giant metal friend screens as part of Eugene's Movie Night in the Park. 9 pm Friday, Aug. 8, Monroe Park. Free.

Pineapple Express: I've been waiting for this one since I first saw the redband (R-rated) trailer, which is full of lines too crassly fantastic to be successfully quoted out of context. Generally, the film (written by the same folks as *Superbad*) is about a pot dealer, one of his customers and some folks who want to kill them. Directed by David Gordon Green, whose usual fare (*All the Real Girls*) is a little different. R. 111 min. Cinemark. VRC Stadium 15.

Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2: The sequel to the sweet and light 2005 film jumps ahead three years (and, I gather, a few books in the series) to the foursome's departure for different colleges. Stars America Ferrera, Blake Lively (now a bigger name thanks to *Gossip Girl*), Amber Tamblyn and Alexis Bledel. PG13. 117 min. Cinemark. VRC Stadium 15.

Tropic Thunder: Ben Stiller directs this send-up of actors and, one assumes, war movies; he also stars (with Jack Black and Robert Downey Jr.) as one of the primadonna actors whose director (Steve Coogan) decides to impart a bit of realism to his Vietnam film — by dropping his stars into the jungle and filming their reactions. R. 107 min. Midnight showing on Tuesday, Aug. 12; film opens Aug. 13. Cinemark.

When Did You Last See Your Father?: This adaptation of a book by Blake Morrison (*Paranoid Park*) stars the appealing duo of Colin Firth as Blake and Jim Broadbent as his father Arthur, with whom Blake has a less than stellar relationship. It's a bit too heavy-handed, but worthwhile; *The New York Times* says it's "grown-up, civilized fare, even though the whole thing might have been improved with a bit of messiness." PG13. 92 min. Bijou. **See review this issue**.

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

CONTINUING:

Baby Mama: When successful businesswoman Kate (Tiny Fey) finds that she can't conceive the kid she wants, she hires Angie (Amy Poehler) as her surrogate. It's a clash of personalities and more when Angie shows up on Kate's doorstep. "An essentially sweet-natured picture that doesn't go as far as it could," says Salon.com. PG13. 96 min. Movies 12.

Chronicles of Narnia, The: Prince Caspian: When the Pevensie children find themselves back in Narnia, it's just a year later for them — and 1300 years later for the magical land, now under the control of an evil foreigner. Lucy, Susan, Peter and Edmund (with help, of course) must help get the true king back on Narnia's throne. PG. 144 min. Movies 12. ★★½☆☆ (5/22)

Dark Knight, The: Christopher Nolan's second take on the alter ego of Bruce Wayne (Christian Bale), who has a new nemesis in the Joker (Heath Ledger, earning whispers of a posthumous Oscar nod), is both an enthrallingly entertaining summer action movie and a complicated moral tangle. With Maggie Gyllenhaal, Michael Caine and Aaron Eckhart. PG13.152 min. Cinemark. VRC Stadium 15. ★★★★½ (7/24)

Fall, The: In a Los Angeles hospital in the 1920s, an injured stuntman (Lee Pace) weaves a multi-layered fantastic tale for a young girl (Catinca Untaru). Director Tarsem (*The Cell*, but don't hold that against him) filmed in countless locations around the world to create an unforgettably beautiful story about connection — and the way a story depends not only on who's telling it, but who's listening. R. 117 min. Bijou. ★★★★★ (6/29)

Get Smart: Steve Carell is newly promoted former CONTROL analyst Maxwell Smart, sent on a mission to save the world from agents of KAOS; Anne Hathaway is his sidekick (who one suspects may be slightly more competent), Agent 99. This adaptation of the 1960s TV show also gives us Terence Stamp as a baddie and The Rock as a superspy. PG13. 110 min. VRC Stadium 15.

Hancock: Grumpy, drunken, superpowered Hancock (Will Smith, aka Mr. July) has a habit of wreaking considerable destuction when saving lives. But a PR guy (Jason Bateman) somehow shows Hancock that he does have a softer side. He can be better! At least I think that's what he says in the ads. PG13. 92 min. Cinemark. VRC Stadium 15.

Happening, The: Are you willing to give M. Night Shyamalan another chance? His followup to *Lady in the Water* is about a couple (Mark Wahlberg and the very likable Zooey Deschanel) trying to survive after some sort of ... er .. *happening*. From what I hear, it's ecological in nature. Run! Global warming is chasing you! R. 91 min. Movies 12. ★☆☆☆☆ (6/19)

Hellboy II: The Golden Army: "The world's toughest kitten-loving hero from Hell" (Ron Perlman) — with sidekick Abe (Doug Jones, last seen as the Faun in director Guillermo del Toro's *Pan's Labyrinth*) and love interest Liz (Selma Blair) — finds himself standing between an army of fantastic creatures and the world as we know it when an ancient truce is broken. PG13. Cinemark. ★★★☆☆ (7/17)

Incredible Hulk, The: Edward Norton slips into the torn pants recently worn by Eric Bana in this reinvention of the Hulk franchise. Norton's Hulk is trying to find a cure, but warmongers want to use his powers for evil. With Tim Roth and Liv Tyler. PG13. 114 min. Movies 12. ★★½☆☆ (6/26)

Iron Man: The first major summer flick stars Robert Downy Jr. as Tony Stark, a wealthy industrialist who devises a suit that gives him the superheroic ability to take down baddies who misuse his destructive technology. Awesome. With Jeff Bridges, Terrence Howard and Gwyneth Paltrow. PG13. Movies 12. ★★★★☆ (5/8)

Journey to the Center of the Earth: Brendan Fraser stars as a less-than-traditional scientist who finds himself leading his nephew and a friend into the center of the earth, where there's ... another world! In 3D, which makes all those falling rocks and underground dinosaurs even more exciting. PG. 89 min. Cinemark. VRC Stadiium 15.

Kung Fu Panda: Jack Black — or at least his voice — stars as Po the Panda, a waiter whose love for kung fu serves him well when it turns out there's a prophecy about him saving the world from some powerful enemies. With the voices of Dustin Hoffman, Angelina Jolie and Jackie Chan. PG. 88 min. Cinemark.

Mamma Mia!: Get the song outta my head! Oh, too late. Anyway, the giant hit Broadway musical becomes a giant film starring Meryl Streep as the mother whose daughter (Amanda Seyfried of *Veronica Mars*) wants to find out who her father is: Colin Firth, Pierce Brosnan or Stellan Skarsgard. Oh, and there's some Abba. PG13. 108 min. Cinemark. VRC Stadium 15.

Midnight Meat Train: An up-and-coming photographer in seach of "dark subject matter" finds himself fascinated with a serial killer who butchers late-night commuters. Shudder. Stars Bradley Cooper, Leslie Bibb and, as deadly Mahogany, Vinnie Jones. Based on a short story by Clive Barker. R. 100 min. Movies 12.

Mummy, The: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor: Brendan Fraser goes on his second summer adventure and his third as "explorer" Rick O'Connell. Rick's got to take down a long-dead emperor (Jet Li) who, one assumes, wants to take over the world (isn't that what evil emperors do?). Maria Bello takes over from Rachel Weisz as wife Evelyn; newbie Luke Ford is son Alex; John Hannah returns as Rick's wisecracking brother; Michelle Yeoh livens things up as a "double-crossing sorceress." PG13. 112 min. Cinemark. VRC Stadium 15.

Space Chimps: Animated flick involving, um, space chimps. They're sent into space to visit an inhabited planet, only to find themselves stuck there with the planet's tyrannical leader. I just can't seem to muster much enthusiasm for this one. G. 81 min. Movies 12.

Step Brothers: Just what the world doesn't need: another Will Ferrell/John C. Reilly comedy. This time, the two are immature fellows whose parents get married. They hate each other, and then they love each other, and then they have to save the family. And every single joke in the trailer falls flat. R. Cinemark. VRC Stadium 15.

Swing Vote: Kevin Costner plays a totally ordinary everydude who, though a clearly bizarre chain of events, becomes the man on whose vote an entire! presidential! election! hangs! Oh, timeliness. Still, Roger Ebert says it's a "genial comedy" with "significant undertones." PG13. 100 min. Cinemark. VRC Stadium 15.

Wackness, The: Jonathan Levine directs this coming of age in the early '90s flick about a young pot dealer, Luke (Josh Peck), wrestling with a crush on Stephanie (Olivia Thirlby) and an odd friendship with her stepfather, Dr. Squires (Ben Kingsley), who's both Luke's customer and his shrink. R. 110 min. Bijou. ★★★½☆ (7/31)

WALL-E: The latest from the geniuses at Pixar is about a lonely trash-cleaning robot on what's left of Earth. A sleek robot named EVE discovers, when she visits the deserted planet, that WALL-E's figured out something important, so off to the stars (and the humans) she races, a besotted WALL-E in pursuit. "One of the best movies of the year," said Richard Roeper. G. 97 min. Cinemark. VRC Stadium 15. ★★★★☆ (7/3)

Wanted: This disasatrously bad Angelina Jolie-starring assassin flick is directed by Timur Bekmanbetov, who was behind the underseen *Night Watch*. Jolie and Morgan Freeman are part of the Fraternity, a secret society of assassins; the usually delightful James McAvoy is the whingy former office drone who gets recruited after his father is killed. R. 110 min. Movies 12.

What Happens in Vegas: Cameron Diaz and Ashton Kutcher star as a couple that gets rather spontaneously wed in Vegas, then realizes they hate each other — only to wind up stuck together when he puts her quarter in a slot machine and hits the jackpot. PG13. 99 min. Movies 12.

X-Files: I Want to Believe: Oh, Chris Carter. You gave me a title like that and then ... you failed. I *wanted* to believe that this X-film, coming years after the last and apparently requiring no previous knowledge of the X-Files mythology, would be as good as possible, but you stuffed it full of stupidity. And some offensiveness, too. Fie. PG13. Cinemark. VRC Stadium 15. ½☆☆☆☆ (7/31)