



ReOrient Yourself

Asian American Film Festival celebrates diversity

This weekend, the fourth **DisOrient Asian American Film Festival** takes over the Bijou (or at least part of it). The annual volunteer-run event, which this year will show more than eight feature and 20 short films, is committed to “presenting honest portrayals of the diversity of Asian American experience.” The films range from documentaries (*Patsy Mink: Ahead of the Majority*; *Manilatown is in the Heart*; *Vincent Who?*) to a lone music video to feature-length narrative films. The festival opens with *Children of the Water*, which was an official selection at this year’s Sundance Film Festival, and closes with *White On Rice*, the story of a 40-year-old

man (Hiroshi Watanabe) who’s both newly divorced and taking his own sweet time growing up (the preview for this one is a total charmer, but technical difficulties sadly kept me from watching it). In between, DisOrient includes *I Am That Girl*, which is particularly notable for the number of roles — just one onscreen, but several off — taken on by its lead, Grace Rowe, who is also the film’s writer, editor and producer. Rowe stars as Maxine, a seemingly shallow L.A. woman who spends several times her annual salary (at a dead-end job, of course) on drinks and designer clothing. Her life is turned neatly (perhaps a bit too neatly) on its head by nature-loving Noodle (Michael Jaworski),

whom she meets when he bursts into a bar bathroom to be sick. Though Noodle doesn’t really seem to think much of Max, he takes her camping in the Sierras, where she reveals some backstory to her gleeful irresponsibility and he, well, he doesn’t reveal much, but he still changes Max’s life completely. Cinematographer Joseph White conjures up lovely images not only of the Sierras, but of the rest of Max’s journey. Also screening during the festival is *The First Breath of Tengan Rei*, directed by husband and wife team Ed M. Koziarski and Junko Kajino. *Tengan Rei* follows its title character (Erika Oda) as she kidnaps a sweet-faced American teenager, Paris (Katori Eason). The kid is the son of a former Marine who was convicted of raping Rei in Okinawa 10 years earlier. Rei is in the U.S. to find something, some kind of closure; it seems as though she wants revenge, but she’s a bit more subtle than that as she drives a wedge of disappointment and anger between Paris and his father, Nelson (Sean Nix). Koziarski and Kajino gradually fill in the story of what happened in the past, setting Rei’s terrible experience against a beautiful day, all sun and sand and bright water. They find beauty, too, in the dingy hotel room to which Rei takes Paris. *Rei* is a story of forgiveness in multiple directions, and a graceful debut. The DisOrient Asian American Film Festival takes place April 17-19 at the Bijou, with opening and closing night receptions on the UO campus. For full schedule, see www.disorientfilm.org **EW**

OPENING OR RETURNING:
Banff Mountain Film Festival: Touring festival includes short films about kayaking, skiing, crossing the Arctic, rockclimbing, biking, BASE jumping and more. Different program each night. 7:30 pm Thursday, April 16, and Saturday, April 18, McDonald Theatre. \$10 adv., \$12 door.
Crank: High Voltage: Jason Statham reprises his role as a hitman who has to undertake stranger and stranger escapes in order to stay alive. Now, his heart’s been replaced with a battery-powered thing that requires jolts of energy. But he wants his real heart back! R. 85 min. Cinemark. VRC Stadium 15.
Directed by Steven Spielberg: The UO film series starts back up with *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, preceded by a short talk from a UO grad student. 6 pm Thursday, April 23, 110 Willamette, UO. Free.
DisOrient Film Festival: Asian-American festival features short and feature-length films, including *I Am That Girl*; *Children of Invention*, which showed at Sundance; revenge drama *The First Breath of Tengan Rei*; *White On Rice*, an unconventional family comedy; and more. (See www.disorientfilm.org for full schedule.) April 17-19, Bijou.
Earth Day: Former eco-crusaders are being targeted — but by whom? The prime suspect is the guy who was kicked out of his terrorist sect for “embracing the forbidden art of women’s hair care,” but we suspect he ain’t the guy. This locally produced independent horror comedy has its world premiere at 5 pm, 7 pm and 9 pm Wednesday, April 22, DIVA. \$5. www.myspace.com/fauxshowproductions
4/20 Party: Catch screenings of *Reefer Madness* (4:20 pm & 9:05 pm), *Up in Smoke* (6 pm & 7:30 pm), *Half Baked* (4:20 pm & 9:05 pm) and *Dazed and Confused* (6 pm & 7:30 pm) — and yes, munchies will be served. April 20, David Minor Theater. 21+.
He’s Just Not That Into You: Great cast, embarrassing premise; it’s based, loosely I assume, on the unfortunate book of the same title. However will these lovely young folks ever find true love? PG13. Movies 12.
Heckler’s Night: Mock loudly and cheerfully as the Goat screens *They Live*. 7 pm Wednesday, April 22, Wandering Goat. Free.
International, The: Clive Owen and Naomi Watts fight to bring down a bank that’s doing nasty, nasty things with your money. The trailer is so full of clichéd lines it almost hurts, but it’s still Clive Owen, right? Directed by Tom Tykwer (*Run Lola Run*). R. Movies 12.
Last House on the Left, The: When two girls are attacked by escaped convicts, they manage to get away to one girl’s house — where their attackers have also taken shelter. Why is the talented Garret Dillahunt in this needless remake of a Wes Craven flick that was already a remake of something else? R. 100 min. Movies 12.
Margaret Meade Film & Video Festival: International documentary series continues with *Confronting Terrorism: Promised Paradise*, about a puppeteer who goes to Bali to confront those responsible for the October 2002 bombing of a nightclub. (Festival continues April 29.) 7 pm Wednesday, April 22, 175 Knight Law, UO. \$3.
Seventeen Again: Would Zac Efron really grow up into Chandler Bing? Er, I mean Matthew Perry? That’s just one thing to consider in this comedy, in which washed-up former high-school hot stuff Mike O’Donnell (Perry) finds himself in his 17-year-old body again. With Leslie Mann, Thomas Lennon and Michelle Trachtenberg. PG13. Cinemark. VRC Stadium 15.
State of Play: Kevin Macdonald (*The Last King of Scotland*) remakes the 2003 British TV series, moving it to the U.S., where a congressman’s research assistant is murdered, and an old friend (Russell Crowe) is on the story. With Helen Mirren as Crowe’s editor, Rachel McAdams as his partner and Ben Affleck as the maybe not-so-perfect congressman. PG13. 132 min. Cinemark. VRC Stadium 15.
Video Slam: Monthly event invites video artists to submit short videos of up to 10 minutes for a competition that follows the format of the poetry slam. 7 pm April 19, DIVA. Free.
Films open the Friday following EW publication date unless otherwise noted. See archived reviews at www.eugeneweekly.com

READING & BOOK SIGNING

JOHN DANIEL

Tuesday, April 21, 2009 • 7 p.m. • FREE

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