

Tribute: Never Stands Still

Modern Dance Documentary Pays Tribute to Jacob's Pillow Festival

**Review by Kam Williams
Special to TheSkanner News**

The Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival traces its roots back to the Thirties when it was founded on a farm nestled in the Berkshire Mountains by the legendary Ted Shawn (1891-1972). He envisioned the retreat as an oasis where modern dance might be practiced, choreographed and performed as a legitimate art form independent of classical ballet.

Other than being derailed by a temporary setback during The Depression, the festival's stature grew steadily over the ensuing years. In 1942, Shawn built a theater in a converted barn so that patrons could enjoy modern for modern's sake, independent of the distracting trappings of a big city opera house.

Now celebrating its 80th anniversary, Jacob's Pillow is a veritable mecca recognized as America's longest-running dance festival. Direct-

ed by Ron Honsa, 'Never Stand Still' is an enchanting tribute destined to delight both modern dance devotees and the curious alike.

Narrated by Bill T. Jones, this alternately educational and entertaining documentary divides its time between concert footage and informative interviews with industry icons like Merce Cunningham, Bill Irwin, Paul Taylor, Judith Jamison and Suzanne Farrell. We learn that dance is definitely a calling and not a life for anyone who wants a secure career path, since you're always just an ingénue or an injury away from losing the limelight forever.

Jamison reminds us, however, that to reach the top, you have to be more than merely technically adept. You need to be among those rarest of talents also capable of touching the human spirit.

Modern dance appreciated as a sacred endeavor enabling one to fly above the fray, if not literally, vicariously, at the very least.

**Excellent (4 stars)
Unrated
Running time: 74 minutes
Distributor: First Run Features**



Never Stand Still

Battleship: Fights Space Invaders



International Armada Defends Earth from Aliens in Epic Naval Showdown

**Review by Kam Williams
Special to TheSkanner News**

Though ostensibly inspired by the Hasbro board game of the same name, "Battleship" is a special f/x-driven, sci-fi adventure that actually has much more in common with bombastic blockbusters like "Armageddon" (1998), "Transformers" (2007) and "Independence Day" (1996). To its credit, this variation on the theme does devote considerable attention to developing a back story before letting all hell breaks loose.

That gives the audience a reason to care about the characters upon the breakout of war with bloodthirsty invaders from outer space. Another positive is director Peter Berg's capable cast, led by veteran thespian Liam Neeson, Taylor Kitsch, Alexander Skarsgard and Brooklyn Decker. Along for the roller coaster ride is pop icon Rihanna, who more than holds her own in an auspicious acting debut as Petty Officer Cora Raikes.

However, the diva's diehard fans might be disappointed that she doesn't get to sing here, unless whispering a few bars of "Sentimental Journey" counts. Furthermore, her curvy physique is kept camouflaged for most of the movie under unflattering military fatigues.

The picture's point of departure is 2005, which is when we meet Stone (Skarsgard) and Alex Hopper (Kitsch), two brothers seemingly headed in opposite directions. The former is serving his country as captain of the destroyer USS Sampson, while his ne'er-do-well sibling

lands in jail over an attractive blonde (Decker) whose father (Neeson) is in charge of the entire Pacific fleet.

Fast forward to the present where we learn that Alex has not only enlisted in the Navy, but that he's already risen to the rank of Lieutenant. He is also dating Samantha over the objections of her disapproving dad who doesn't 100 percent trust that her hot-headed suitor has turned a new leaf.

Alex is in the process of summoning up the courage to ask Admiral Shane for permission to marry his daughter when five vessels arrive from planet G and proceed, without provocation, to decimate an international armada on maneuvers in the middle of the ocean. Suddenly, wedding plans have to take a back seat to defending the planet.

Furthermore, as the most senior officer aboard his ship to survive the initial attack, Alex assumes command of the USS John Paul Jones. This affords the former bad boy an opportunity to exhibit his bravery (in the tradition of Revolutionary War hero Jones' "I have not yet begun to fight!") as well as a much-needed chance to redeem himself in the eyes of his future father-in-law.

The epitome of a summer blockbuster: a dizzying display of derring-do, patriotism and fearlessness in the face of an overwhelming alien invasion on the high seas. And the guy even gets the girl.

**Very Good (3 stars)
Rated PG-13 for profanity and intense violence.
Running time: 131 minutes
Distributor: Universal Pictures**

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SEATTLE 2012

THE SKANNER.com

If you have an event you want to share with the community, email it two weeks in advance to *The Skanner* at info@theskanner.com

Friday May 25

NATHAN HALE STUDENTS SPONSORING ANTI-DRUG CARNIVAL. Raiders Against Destructive Decisions will be kicking off the long Memorial Day weekend with the after school event which runs from 3 - 5:30 p.m. in the Nathan Hale High School Football Field and Track, 10750 30th Ave. NE,

41ST ANNUAL NORTHWEST FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL. Northwest Folklife is happy to again offer a wide

variety of activities for all ages at the 41st Annual NW Folklife Festival, happening this Memorial Day Weekend in Seattle Center. As always the festival charges no admission fee. Seattle Center (by the Space Needle.) All weekend event. 10 a.m.

Saturday June 26

6TH ANNUAL GIG HARBOR SCRAMBLE. Come join the fun at the 6th Annual Gig Harbor Scramble starting at 10 a.m. at Skanse Brothers Park, 3207 Harborview Dr. This free family event marks the official kick-off to summer and outdoor fun in Gig Harbor.

Monday May 28

MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVATIONS TO BE HELD ON THE CAPITAL CAMPUSGROUNDS. Beginning at 10:30 a.m. the Thurston County Veteran Coalition is holding its annual program in the State Capital Rotunda. The American Legion Band will perform

at 10:30 a.m. followed by the ceremony at 11 a.m. Olympia, WA

Saturday June 2

KIDNEY HEALTH FEST FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILIES: This free event runs from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. at Van Asselt Elementary School, 8311 Beacon Ave. S. This year's theme is Celebrating 10 Years Towards Kidney Wellness, Mind, Body and Soul.

MOVING BEYOND CANCER TO WELLNESS. This is a free educational event for cancer survivors and caregivers. Hosted by Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center Survivorship Program. 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, 1100 Fairview Ave. N. This free event is open to the public. For more information please call 206-667-5262.