

MOVIE BEER NIGHT -TUE, JUNE 24, 2008 - EOP DAY= -3 KWANZAA DAY 175

Come and watch a movie or just kick back with other hashers, have a burger and a few cheap brewskis. Some of us just hang out over beers long after the movies have started, but at the movies we're still passing around the flasks.

All NOW run only \$4.50 each! (most other theaters are \$10)

Also – they seem to have some special of large popcorn & cokes for \$10 - & free refills with that special.

Irving Mall - Belt Line Rd x Airport Frwy (Hwy 183)

There's grub, beer at Fuddruckers at the mall b4hand ~ 6:15ish on.....next door to Barnes & Noble.

The sign says "FUDDS." Great burgers, fries, salads

GET SMART (7:20, 8:10)

(Comedy, Parody) DMN: B- Fans: 4/5 stars

THE LOVE GURU (8:00)

(Comedy, Sports) DMN: B- Fans: 4/5 stars

THE INCREDIBLE HULK (7:00, 7:40)

(Action/Adventure, Superheroes) Critics: B, B- DMN: B Viewers: A-

THE HAPPENING (7:50)

(Thriller, Action/Adventure) Critics: C-, C- DMN: C- Viewers: B-

YOU DON'T MESS WITH THE ZOHAN (7:15, 7:55)

(Comedy) Critics: B-, C DMN: C+ Viewers: B

KUNG FU PANDA (7:10, 8:00)

(Animation, Children's, Martial Arts) Critics: B-, C+ DMN: B+ Viewers: B+

THE STRANGERS (8:05)

(Horror, Thriller) Critics: B-, C+ DMN: C Viewers: B+

SEX & THE CITY (7:30)

(Chick Flick) Critics: B, B- DMN: A- Viewers: B-

INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL (7:05)

(Action/Adventure) Critics: B+, B- DMN: B Viewers: B+

IRON MAN (7:45)

(Action/Adventure) Critics: A-, A- DMN: B+ Viewers: A-

GET SMART (7:20, 8:10)

(Comedy, Parody) DMN: B- Fans: 4/5 stars

Rating: PG-13 for some rude humor, action violence and language

Running Time: 110 minutes

Who's In It?: Steve Carell, Anne Hathaway, Dwayne Johnson, Alan Arkin, Terence Stamp, Ken Davitian

Synopsis: When the headquarters of U.S. spy agency Control is attacked and the identities of its agents compromised, the Chief (Alan Arkin) has no choice but to promote his ever-eager analyst Maxwell Smart (Steve Carell), who has always dreamt of working in the field alongside stalwart superstar Agent 23 (Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson). Smart is partnered instead with the only other agent whose identity has not been compromised: the lovely-but-lethal veteran Agent 99 (Anne Hathaway). As Smart and 99 get closer to unraveling KAOS' master plan—and each other—they discover that key KAOS operative Siegfried (Terence Stamp) and his sidekick Shtarker (Kenneth Davitian) are scheming to cash in with their network of terror. Given little field experience and even less time, Smart—armed with nothing but a few spy-tech gadgets and his unbridled enthusiasm—must defeat KAOS if he is to save the day.

The Basics: 40-Year-Old Virgin star Steve Carell steps into the telephonic shoes of television's most beloved bumbling detective in this big-screen adaptation of the hit 1960s-era comedy series created by Mel Brooks. The evil geniuses at KAOS have hatched a diabolical plot to dominate every living man, woman, and child on the planet, and their plot gets under way as they attack the headquarters of the U.S. spy agency Control. As a result of the attack, the identity of every agent working for Control has been compromised. Realizing that the only way to thwart KAOS' evil plan is to promote eager but inexperienced Control analyst Maxwell Smart (Carell) to the rank of special agent, the Chief (Alan Arkin) reluctantly teams Smart with Agent 99 (Anne Hathaway) -- a veteran super-spy whose beauty is only surpassed by her lethality. With no real field experience to speak of and nothing but sheer enthusiasm and a handful of fancy spy gadgets to help him accomplish his deadly mission, Maxwell Smart his new partner, Agent 99, will be forced to face malevolent KAOS head Siegfried (Terence Stamp) and his loyal army of minions in a decisive fight that will determine the fate of the free world. Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, David Koechner, Terry Crews, and Ken Davitian co-star.

THE LOVE GURU (8:00)

(Comedy, Sports) DMN: B- Fans: 4/5 stars

Rating: PG-13 for crude and sexual content throughout, language, some comic violence and drug references

Running Time: 88 minutes

Who's In It?: Mike Myers, Jessica Alba, Justin Timberlake, Romany Malco, Verne Troyer, Ben Kingsley

Synopsis: Born in America and raised in an Indian ashram, Pitka (Mike Myers) returns to his native land to seek his fortune as a spiritualist and self-help expert. His skills are put to the test when he must get a brokenhearted hockey player's marriage back on track in time for the man to help his team win the Stanley Cup.

The Basics: Austin Powers trilogy star Mike Myers collaborates with writer Graham Gordy for this comedy concerning a self-help guru named Pitka (Myers), who devotes his life to unknotting the romantic entanglements of troubled couples. As a young child, Pitka is abandoned at the gates of an ashram in India and taken in by kindly gurus. An American by birth, Pitka absorbs the lessons taught to him by his teachers and later returns to the United States to become a leading authority on spirituality and self-help. While Pitka's methods are decidedly unorthodox, they may be the only means of ensuring that the Toronto Maple Leafs win the coveted Stanley Cup.

The Maple Leaf's star Darren Roanoke (Romany Malco) is in trouble. His estranged wife has recently begun dating L.A. Kings star Jacques Grande (Justin Timberlake) in a vengeful effort to send her husband's career into a tailspin, and when Roanoke starts to falter on the ice, the whole team starts to suffer. As their visions of leading the Toronto Maple Leafs to the Stanley Cup are quickly going up in flames, team owner Jane Bullard (Jessica Alba) and Coach Cherkov (Verne Troyer) enlist the aid of the world's best-known relationship expert in restoring the peace between Roanoke and his wife, and getting their team back on the track to the championships.

THE INCREDIBLE HULK (7:00, 7:40)

(Action/Adventure, Superheroes) Critics: B, B- DMN: B Viewers: A-

Rating: PG-13 - for sequences of intense action violence, some frightening sci-fi images, and brief suggestive content

Running Time: 114 minutes

Who's In It?: Edward Norton, Liv Tyler, William Hurt, Tim Roth

Synopsis: Still stuck with the ability to turn into a raging behemoth, Bruce Banner (Edward Norton) desperately searches for a cure that will rid him of his gamma-irradiated alter ego once and for all. However, he's barely given a chance to stop running from the obsessed General Thunderbolt Ross (William Hurt), who will use the entire might of the U.S. military to find Banner and kill the Hulk. Meanwhile, Banner must also deal with his tortured relationship with Betty Ross (Liv Tyler), as well as contend with a new opponent, another gamma-created monstrosity called the Abomination (Tim Roth).

The Basics: Hulk come back for smash more. Hulk run from bad government. Then smash. Hulk girlfriend look more like Liv Tyler than Jennifer Connelly. Still pretty to Hulk and love him. Bad man turn into Abomination. Fight Hulk. More smash. Tony Stark make cameo. Him smartass. Hulk no smash.

What's the Deal? I can forgive this for being less awesome than *Iron Man* because it kind of has no choice. Bruce Banner is nowhere near as cool a dude as Tony Stark in his non-superhero form. He's just a tormented nerd. So where Robert Downey Jr. struts around and makes you like his jerkness, Norton is all head-in-the-hands and broody — the way Norton is in almost every movie he's in. Anyway, it's also much more coherent than the first *Hulk*, because it wants to please you instead of wanting to be art. And when it's summertime, and you're just looking for a little destruction, that's plenty.

Nerd-gasms Abound: You want Bill Bixby stuff? Lou Ferrigno stuff? All that other stuff that only you and the other millions of Comic-Con attendees know about? It's here. Commence arguing on the message boards.

Who's Way Better Than You'd Expect: Tyler takes the thankless role of Female Lead and makes you actually feel her separation anxiety from Banner. Maybe she got to sit in the editing room and make sure her part wasn't shaved down to nothing.

What's Next: An eventual Avengers movie, of course. That's why Stark shows up, so they can make more movies and build new franchises. Why not?

THE HAPPENING (7:50)

(Thriller, Action/Adventure) Critics: C-, C- DMN: C- Viewers: B-

Rating: R - for violent and disturbing images

Running Time: 91 minutes

Who's In It?: Mark Wahlberg, Zoey Deschanel, John Leguizamo, Betty Buckley, Spencer Breslin

Director(s): M. Night Shyamalan

Writer(s): M. Night Shyamalan

Synopsis: When the entire fate of humanity is threatened, Elliot Moore (Mark Wahlberg) takes his family and tries to avoid the impending apocalypse.

The Basics: Something in the air is making people in New York City and Philadelphia freeze in their tracks and then murder themselves (as the camera cuts to a newspaper headline that screams, "KILLADELPHIA!") and high school science teacher Mark Wahlberg alone has the Einsteinian mind to reason his way through it. Meanwhile, he keeps fiddling with his mood ring. Why?

What's the Deal?: It's kind of hard to talk about this movie without giving away the big "secret," especially when there's barely a big secret to begin with. It's like M. Night Shyamalan decided he needed to change up his M.O., only pretending that there was going to be this big shocking reveal, all the while allowing the characters to talk about the true cause of the so-called "happening" almost non-stop throughout the movie. Hint: Don't let wind blow on you. Seriously. Wind.

A Brief List of Thoughts I Think About The "Big Secret" During This Movie:

1. It's all those bees that have just recently disappeared. That's what's causing it. M. Night Shyamalan knows the secret of the vanishing bees.
2. It's Marky Mark's mood ring. That's what's causing it. When it turns red like the big letter "R" in the ads, then the whole planet is going to freeze and murder itself. M. Night Shyamalan understands the power of moods.
3. It's Betty Buckley. (Remember the stepmom from *Eight is Enough*? Well, I do anyway.) Betty Buckley is this crazy hermit lady they come across as they're all trying to escape the wind. You figure that she probably talks to the wind and makes it freeze you, and then you murder yourself. I was really hoping the universe would bow down to Betty Buckley before the credits rolled.

I Am Not Disappointed by the Fact that M. Night Shyamalan Seems to Think He's a Genius, or That He Sometimes Doesn't Make Sense, or That He Gets Final Cut to the Point of Making His Movies Into Big Ridiculous Messes, but I Am Upset That: This non-happening movie is so dang boring. And this comes from a man who really liked *The Village*.

YOU DON'T MESS WITH THE ZOHAN (7:15, 7:55)

(Comedy) Critics: B-, C DMN: C+ Viewers: B

Rating: PG-13 - for crude and sexual content throughout, language and nudity

Running Time: 113 minutes

Who's In It?: Adam Sandler, John Turturro, Emmanuelle Chriqui, Nick Swardson, Lainie Kazan, Rob Schneider, Dave Matthews

Synopsis: Zohan (Adam Sandler) is the top agent in Israel's Mossad agency, who gets tired of the constant fighting, but his only means of escape is to fake his own death. Relocating to New York City, he reinvents himself as a top hairstylist who gives his women customers great hairdos and a little bit "extra." His newfound idyllic life doesn't last for long, though, when some of his former enemies find out where he's been hiding.

The Basics: Zohan is Israel's best military agent, who fakes his own death to escape the endless conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians. He goes to America to live his dream of becoming a hairdresser and making the world "silky smooth" (as well as having sex with every single one of his female clients) but instead finds more conflicts in the form of a cabbie (Schneider), a celebrity terrorist and fast-food entrepreneur named the Phantom, a beautiful Palestinian salon owner, evil land developers and an endless stream of older women who need his "services."

What's the Deal? This *really* long movie with about half as many hilarious bits as it needs to warrant the nearly two-hour running time gets by because it knows what targets to aim for and be stupid about. It takes serious subjects like war, religious conflict, bigotry, terrorism, stereotypes of gender, race, age and sexual orientation and squashes them all with a big ACME mallet from an old Bugs Bunny cartoon. It's not as smart or to-the-point as an old Bugs Bunny cartoon, but it earns credit for demanding to have its own way at all times and making you laugh at the absurdity of the world's intolerance instead of the people involved in that intolerance. I know, I wasn't expecting that from an Adam Sandler movie, either.

Other Movies It References: Sandler co-wrote the script with Robert Smigel (he's Triumph the Insult Comic Dog) and Judd Apatow, who seem to all be fans of the 1970s Warren Beatty-as-a-hairdressing-stud film *Shampoo* because that's where its main plot device comes from (notwithstanding the counter-terrorism stuff), as well as lots of martial arts and James Bond movies. Meanwhile, the ending feels like an odd, dumb re-imagining of *Do the Right Thing*.

Most Scenes Stolen By: Swardson (*Grandma's Boy*, *Gay Robot*), who spends most of the movie nauseated because Zohan keeps having sex with his mom. Matthews as a bigoted redneck Mel Gibson fan comes in a close second.

Weirdest Cameo: Mariah Carey, who gets to act more like herself than when she actually played a version of herself in *Glitter*.

KUNG FU PANDA (7:10, 8:00)

(Animation, Children's, Martial Arts) Critics: B-, C+ DMN: B+ Viewers: B+

Rating: PG - for sequences of martial arts action

Running Time: 88 minutes

Who's In It?: Voices of Jack Black, Dustin Hoffman, Angelina Jolie, Seth Rogen, Lucy Liu, Jackie Chan, Ian McShane

Synopsis: Po the Panda (voice of Jack Black) dreams of being a martial-arts master but is, in reality, a fat, lazy, black-and-white slob. But when his town is threatened by evildoers, a group of real kung fu experts need to transform Po into the legendary "Chosen One," who is destined to save the day.

The Basics: A kung fu-obsessed, steamed-dumplings and almond-cookie-devouring panda finds himself mistakenly chosen to be the "Dragon Warrior." It'll be his job to save his home from the unstoppable power and wrath of the vengeful tiger Tai Lung.

What's the Deal? Hey, Pixar, they're gaining on you. This one finally cracks the secret code: endearingly sweet, memorable characters and a distinct lack of sarcastic dialogue and pop-culture-fried one-liners that date a movie faster than someone yelling "Who let the dogs out!" Also? Major toy tie-in possibilities. This could be bigger than *Cars*. It's definitely better.

Who's Surprisingly Un-Annoying: Black. His wild-eyed demeanor can beat you down sometimes. But he's learned how to direct his energy into a voice performance without crushing the character under the weight of his wacky delivery.

Weakest Link: Jolie. It sounds like she was going for Zen-like serenity and quiet strength, but it all comes out sounding generic and bland.

Why It's PG: Bloodless, *Looney Tunes*-esque kung fu action. And it's not even in the same league as the insane violence of *Prince Caspian*, which was also rated PG. There's also the mildest of semi-adult language in one scene, where Black talks about how his kung fu "sucked." I know some parents (like my sister-in-law with three young children) aren't down for that word, but that's the only one of its kind here.

THE STRANGERS (8:05)

(Horror, Thriller) Critics: B-, C+ DMN: C Viewers: B+

Rating: R - for violence/terror and language

Running Time: 90 minutes

Who's In It?: Liv Tyler, Scott Speedman

Synopsis: James and Kristen (Scott Speedman, Liv Tyler) travel out to a house in the middle of nowhere to relax. However, they won't be doing much of that when they are terrorized by a masked gang of psychos who are trying to torture and kill them.T

The Basics: OK, question: If a person with a scarecrow mask on his head walked into your living room and started terrorizing you, wouldn't you run? You would, right? Like, immediately? And if your spouse came home, and you said, "Hey, there's not just one but three masked murderers after us!" and then the spouse tried to make you think you were imagining it, you'd still run right? If you answered yes, then you're not Tyler's character in this horror flick.

What's the Deal?: Having said all that, this is not a horrible time at the movies. In fact, it's still creepy and relentlessly jolting, because writer-director Bryan Bertino knows how to keep making you jump in your seat. He's got one gag — the killer leaping out of the dark or emerging unexpectedly in the frame — but he keeps doing it even after you think it's going to stop, and it just gets unnerving after a while.

What's Seriously Wrong With It: It relies on the victims being absolute morons and allowing themselves to be boxed in, and it allows for killers who can be everywhere at once and somehow totally silent whenever it suits the movie. There's a scene where Tyler has no idea one of them is coming up behind her. Outside. In the crackling brush of the woods. And the only sound audible to the audience is background score. I turned to my viewing companion and said, "Well, she might have heard the bad maniac approaching if someone had turned down the loud horror music."

Bottom Line: It's ridiculous, but you'll still not want to be home alone when it's over.

SEX & THE CITY (7:30)

(Chick Flick) Critics: B, B- DMN: A- Viewers: B-

Rating: R - for strong sexual content, graphic nudity and language

Running Time: 148 minutes too long

Who's In It?: Sarah Jessica Parker, Cynthia Nixon, Kim Cattrall, Kristin Davis, Chris Noth

Synopsis: Picking up where the TV series left off four years ago, Carrie Bradshaw (Sarah Jessica Parker) is on the verge of marrying the love of her life, Mr. Big (Chris Noth). Miranda Hobbes (Cynthia Nixon) must deal with some shocking news from her seemingly devoted husband, Steve (David Eigenberg). Charlotte York Goldenblatt (Kristen Davis) is going to have a baby. Finally, Samantha Jones (Kim Cattrall) is now living in a different city: Los Angeles.T

The Basics: When I went to the press screening, a lady from New Line stood in front of the assembled critics and said, "Please don't tell anyone what happens." So here's what else happens besides all the stuff you're not supposed to know about: Carrie buys some Manolo Blahnik shoes, Big does some stuff with and to Carrie, then Miranda utters sex-related wisecracks and gets naked, and Jennifer Hudson introduces Carrie to the purse-renting joys of www.bagborroworsteal.com. There's a whole lot more, but it's secret.

What's the Deal?: Attractive rich people enjoying prohibitively expensive real estate is one of my guilty moviegoing pleasures. And there's a whole lot of consumption going on here. Meanwhile, it can be overstuffed and overlong like this one is, unwinding multiple storylines and meandering around and around and making mountains out of molehills — also like this one does — and still not outstay its welcome. You can chalk that up to the lingering affection these

characters have cultivated through years of syndicated repeats on basic cable. They're like *The Brady Bunch* for aging sluts.

Who Gets Sidelined: Well, J-Hud seems to have been minimized in the editing bay. But it's the male characters, especially Charlotte's husband, Harry, that seem like afterthoughts. At least Big and Brady and Samantha's blond boy-toy are allowed to be plot catalysts to one degree or another. But Harry has fewer scenes than the adopted daughter.

Costume Junkies, Take Note: Rest assured, it's every bit the fashion show the TV series was. In fact, serious attention-payers will notice references to the show's trends and iconic clothing moments given cameos and nods here.

What It All Feels Like: Watching a marathon of episodes (five, to be more or less exact) on DVD. And that ain't a bad thing.

INDIANA JONES & THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL (7:05)

(Action/Adventure) Critics: B+, B- DMN: B Viewers: B+

Rating: PG-13 - for adventure violence and scary images

Running Time: 124 minutes

Who's In It?: Harrison Ford, Shia LaBeouf, Karen Allen, Cate Blanchett, Ray Winstone

Synopsis: In 1957, intrepid archaeologist Indiana Jones (Harrison Ford) is on the verge of losing his job at a prestigious university thanks to some questionable activities he's undertaken recently. He then meets up with a young rebel named Mutt (Shia LaBeouf) who asks Indy to go on another grand adventure: recover a legendary skull made out of crystal which allegedly will allow its owner to rule the world. Traveling down to Peru to an ancient lost city, Indy and Mutt must dodge an evil Russian agent, Irina Spalko (Cate Blanchett), who is after the same object.

The Basics: Indy finds himself in the middle of a hunt for a mysterious magnetic object that will unlock a whole lot of secret knowledge and power. No, it's not the Ark again. I said *magnetic*. Anyway, he'll also cross paths with a former flame (Allen), battle a very wacky Russian (Blanchett), have a tag-along annoyance (LaBeouf), an untrustworthy sidekick (Winstone) and at least one run-in with — and you knew this already because it's just famously part of his ongoing story — snakes.

What's the Deal? Let's see if I can review this with no spoilery details. I mean, yes, I just told you about the snakes. But that's not exactly the same thing. How's this: It's exactly what you think it will be and exactly what most people will want it to be. It's got plenty of excitement and funny, over-the-top unrealism; the story is ludicrously entertaining; and Ford doesn't try to be 30 years younger (well, not much). If there's anything to complain about, it's that you've been here before, and so there's no real surprise coming your way. But again, for me, that's not much of a complaint.

What to Look For: The difference between digital and analog effects. Either digital stuff has gotten so good that it seems three-dimensionally real, or quite a few old-fashioned mechanical-style booby-traps were built for the actors to play on like a whole film's worth of jungle gyms. Either way, it's a blast to watch.

You'll Love, or You'll Hate: Blanchett, as the severe, she-wolfish, Russian clairvoyant. She fully understands the cartoon she's signed on to be in, and she leaps around and sword-fights her way into redefining what "over the top" means.

How Annoying /s Shia LaBeouf? Not nearly as much as you'd expect. In fact, it seems that this was anticipated by the filmmakers, so they went out of their way to make his character already sort of a tool that you begin hating and learn to not-dislike by movie's end. So that was a smart move.

IRON MAN (7:45)

(Action/Adventure)

Critics: A-, A- DMN: B+ Viewers: A-

Rating: PG-13 - for some intense sequences of sci-fi action and violence, and brief suggestive content

Running Time: 126 minutes

Who's In It?: Robert Downey Jr., Gwyneth Paltrow, Jeff Bridges, Terrence Howard

Synopsis: Tony Stark (Robert Downey Jr.) is a billionaire industrialist whose forte is building weapons of mass destruction. When he's severely injured while testing one of those weapons in Afghanistan, he's kidnapped by insurgents and has to build a suit of iron armor to escape his captors. After returning to the U.S., Stark refines his iron creation and transforms himself into a flying metallic repulsor-ray-firing superhero. When his biggest business rival, Obadiah Stane (Jeff Bridges), gets his hands on Stark's original plans, he creates an even bigger iron adversary to defeat Stark once and for all.

Factoid: Director Jon Favreau planned out Iron Man as the first in a trilogy, and has signed on all the original actors. He feels that sequels could allow a latitude in tone, and explore darker story elements such as alcoholism, which he intentionally set aside from the first film. Favreau feels depicting Iron Man's nemesis, the Mandarin, will be challenging, as he finds the character (who was created as a metaphor for communism) dated. Downey said he is so passionate for the character that he would make 15 sequels. Cameos include actress Hilary Swank, Iron Man co-creator Stan Lee (whom Stark mistakes for Hugh Hefner), rapper Ghostface Killah, and director Jon Favreau as Stark's bodyguard Happy Hogan.

The Basics: A conscience-free war profiteer (Mr. Downey Jr. — think a younger, hornier, more quick-witted Dick Cheney) realizes the error of his ways after getting a taste of his own brutality and develops a supersuit that will restore justice and peace to the world. Of course, there are people who want to stop him ...

What's the Deal?: You probably know that, last summer, I was really into *Transformers* and how post-talented Michael Bay was and that it didn't matter that nothing made sense and who cared anyway because it was about giant fighting robots. And I still feel that way. But *this* film, about a giant fighting guy dressed up in a superpowered robot suit, is better, faster and stronger than that other one because he's someone you're genuinely pulling for instead of just cheering on the destruction of it all. That probably marks me as sentimental and weak, but whatever.

Walking the Line: Superhero movies often seem to take place in eras that are out of their time or too much in their time. Some things will appear modern, some things won't, Tobey Maguire will speak in this odd, gee-whiz manner, Jack Nicholson's Joker will be very self-consciously '80s-cool and wind up looking dated. This one's modern and funny — "now" but not frozen-in-2008 hip. It gets its tone just right.

Casting Wins: Well first, the great news is that Downey Jr. is perfect and seems to be playing a version of himself (talented smartass gets his life pulverized only to rise from the ashes), and Bridges has the perfect shaved head for a bad guy. Only Paltrow continues to annoy. At first, she seems more steel-spined than you've ever seen her. And then she wilts. I want about 15 pounds more Barbara Stanwyck in that woman and soon.
