

# FEATURES

## Non-profit haunted house scares children with low-budget tricks



ERIK JACOBS/ STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER  
"Jason" stands awaiting his next group of hapless victims.

**Sarah-Vance Goodman**  
Features Reporter

The time is drawing near once again for ghosts, goblins, spooks and scares, and local haunted houses are opening their doors. The Western North Carolina Historical Society and Chosen Crossroads was obviously on a low budget when they created their haunted house.

I brought two of my younger sisters with me in search of a good Halloween fright.

Although somewhat obscure because of lack of advertising and lighting on the exterior, we spotted the plastic banner with uppercase letters proclaiming, "HAUNTED HOUSE," beside Hendersonville Highway in South Asheville.

The building itself was an ideal setting for an eerie occurrence. From

the outside, its frontal columns created a massive domineering appearance and the run-down interior lent itself to cobwebs and darkness.

My sisters and I filed through the door, and entered into an extreme darkness, a darkness that makes you strain to see something when nothing can be depicted.

Suddenly, a dark blue light descended upon a girl with braids standing amidst a thick haze from a fog machine. She warned us to "stay together, keep contact with the person in front of you...or else, you may get lost and never come out!"

At this point I began to feel like this was either going to be so terribly cheesy I would have to leave right away, or it was going to be frightfully scary. My heart began to pound in anticipation and curiosity.

We shuffled into another room. In it, there was a body lying on a message table in the middle of the

room. The being jerked forward, while letting out a disgusting scream.

It was one of those things that makes your heart skip a beat but will not cause lack of sleep or nightmares.

My sister jumped, squeezing my shoulder blades tightly, while I inwardly laughed at her.

Another room was set up as a hospital emergency room scene, where a woman was lying on a stretcher covered with fake blood. A gory-looking monsterman pretended to cut her to pieces.

Good props, a beating heart resting on the chest of the heaving woman, and the oozing blood, were used for dramatization.

Doors lined the walls, and once the whole group had passed a person with a hockey mask on, slammed the door and began walking methodically towards us.

The Michael Myers character con-

tinued to pursue as my sisters screamed and yelled.

I found my heart beating quite furiously, whether it was from being totally out of cardiovascular shape or from actually being frightened I will never know.

Still, out of sheer fear, my sisters insisted on getting out of the door quickly, where we were met with a roaring chainsaw held by a maniac who chased us down the ramp onto the concrete drive.

I will admit that the Haunted House concluded nicely.

I ran out the back door and into

the parking lot completely convinced I would lose my legs if I did not.

This last attempt to scare us was the Haunted House's saving grace. Chosen Crossroads, a non-profit organization raising money for needy families at Christmas, did a good job, considering the means with which they had to work.

I would not recommend this house to friends of mine unless they had younger siblings to take along. My sisters seemed to really enjoy the 12-minute tour; the eldest one said, "I almost peed in my pants!"

## New movies receive mixed reviews

### Kattan stars in juvenile film

**Margaret Lee**  
Features Reporter

"Corky Romano," starring "Saturday Night Live's" Chris Kattan, proved to be a somewhat funny movie with a somewhat believable plot made for 14 year-olds.

Kattan plays Corky Romano, an animal loving assistant veterinarian, who dreams of owning his own veterinary office. He loves 80s music, smiling and talking in a baby voice to animals.

In the almost plotless movie, Corky's father is wrongly charged with murder, extortion and every other crime committed by a stereotypical mob family. So, Corky joins the FBI to save his father from life in prison.

His family gives Corky a fake resume, which includes him being able to speak five languages and a professional marksman. This lands Corky in lots of trouble as he tries to catch a serial killer for the FBI plus attempt to steal the evidence file for his father.

Somehow, Corky doesn't know his family runs the mob. Is he so stupid to actually think a huge house can be bought from a landscaping business?

The entire movie barely kept my attention except for a few funny lines spread throughout the movie. Most of the humor seemed forced,



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Chris Kattan plays Corky Romano in the film.

ad Kattan's character seems overzealous and dumb. The ending is typical and left me more with a feeling of "thank goodness this movie is over" than "what a funny movie."

Maybe I just don't get childish humor. Maybe all "Saturday Night Live" actors, except Chris Farley, are doomed to be in bad movies. Or maybe "Corky Romano" was just a bad movie.

### Lynch directs complex movie

**Sachie Godwin**  
Features Reporter

"Mulholland Drive," the latest offering from infamous director David Lynch, is as lush and enveloping as it is completely confounding. Somehow, the handful of loose ends at the film's conclusion add to its charm; they lead one to revisit and replay events of the film, while trying to grasp some understanding of the plot.

If you like films that follow predictable narrative structure and conclude with Shakespearean resolution, go see something else. That said, the film is not without a degree of symmetry, and it is not so lyrical that it is devoid of plot or flow.

Even with the amazing twists and turns, random Lynchian weirdness, conspiracy theories about the film industry, multiple characters and narrators, and of course, good 50s music (Lynch cannot stay away from that familiar stomping ground), the story makes sense enough until the last third of the film.

The chronology becomes nothing short of schizophrenic, with a dizzying series of flashbacks that partially illuminate the gist of the story. It begins to make sense that Lynch's concept of

story is based on a sort of esoteric string theory.

"The [story] ideas unraveled like a string, and it came to me a way to do it," Lynch said in an online interview. "Ideas come with many threads. You don't know what is going to happen [and then] the ideas string themselves into a whole."

No matter how confusing the plot is, the film is absolutely gorgeous. Cinematographer Peter Deming paints Los Angeles, Ca. in stunning richness, and uses the juxtaposition between the upper crust of Beverly Hills and the grimy underbelly of downtown dives to mirror the contrasting and sometimes seemingly unrelated activities of the characters.

After leaving the theater, the heightened sense of having been immersed in a dream is more pronounced than usual. The film moves slowly at times; but rather than dragging, it seems to be sleepwalking.

There is much less violence than in some of Lynch's films; although the scenes in which horrifying images flash before the viewer are restrained, they still succeed in chilling you to the core.

"...Funny, querulous...  
shrewd comic delivery."  
-The New York Times



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### Blue Banner Correction:

In Lynne Fox's review of "Strawberries and Chocolate" in the Oct. 4, 2001 issue of *The Blue Banner*, the relationship between Diego (Jorge Purogorria) and David (Vladimir Cruz) was, in fact, not a homosexual relationship. The characters, Diego and David, had a close friendship.

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