

'Irene' Draws Groans, Few Laughs

JUSTIN WINTERS
Staff Writer

Lacking the outright laughs of "Dumb and Dumber" and underlying sweetness of "There's Something About Mary," directing duo Bobby and Peter Farrelly's newest comedy "Me, Myself & Irene" manages to make yuckster Jim Carrey ("Man on the Moon") downright boring. Too bad. "Irene," with its evident

MOVIE REVIEW
"Me, Myself & Irene"



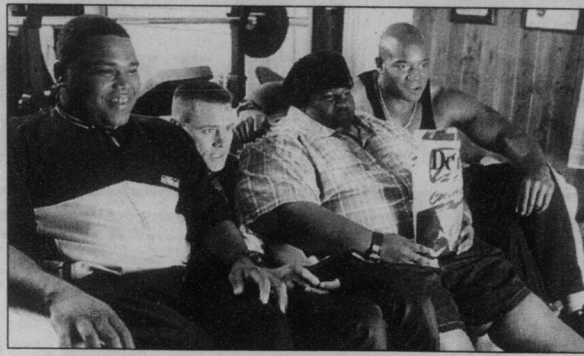
complexion of successful film genes, was being touted as the laugh-out loud savior of the summer. While the Farrellys have never relied much on story in their earlier films ("Dumb" and "Kingpin," like "Irene," revolved around roadtrips), their newest tale takes the old Jekyll and Hyde story to a new plateau. Carrey stars as Me and Myself in the film as a Rhode Island state trooper with split personalities. Charlie is the single, good-natured softie who, after his wife leaves him for

a midget limo driver, has raised three African-American males (more on them later) and Hank is the recently emerged Eastwood-eque persona who doesn't take crap from anyone. Both Carreys end up falling in love with the same girl Irene, played by Renee Zellweger ("Jerry Maguire"), who is on the run from the Environment Protection Agency (don't ask).

Carrey is the obvious star of this show from the get-go. With a rubber body that he can amusingly contort to express his two personalities, the setup for the movie starts innocently enough. The back-and-forth antics between Hank and Charlie wear thin quickly and the directors pull from their bag of tricks a handful of vulgar, unfunny gags, involving cows and chickens, that seem to come out of nowhere.

Supporting actors such as Chris Cooper ("American Beauty"), Robert Forster ("Jackie Brown"), and Zellweger, who usually play serious roles, are seriously unfunny.

Charlie's three sons, who probably could carry a movie themselves, are left with nothing to do but sit around and utter a certain thirteen-letter dirty word



Jim Carrey raises three African-American sons on his own after he is jilted in the Farrelly brothers' new comedy "Me, Myself & Irene."

to fill time.

The one bright spot is the quirky turn by first-time actor Michael Bowman, an Albino who Hank jokingly refers to as Whitey or Milky.

"Irene" ends up prompting more groans than laughs as the Farrellys stupidly use a good idea but don't follow through. The credits do not even use the

Farrelly trademark of a song-and-dance number to end on a high note.

To save money, maybe the directors knew that the audience would already be on their way out of the theater wondering what happened.

The Arts & Entertainment Editor can be reached at artsdesk@unc.edu.

Hawke Convincing as Modern-Day 'Hamlet'

ARIADNE GUTHRIE
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After the tragic remake of "Romeo and Juliet" in 1996, it was all Shakespeare lovers could do not to cry when it was announced that the coveted role of the haunted prince of Denmark would be played by grunge-boy Ethan Hawke. That the play was to be transported from the barren medieval castles of Europe to the streets of New York was nearly too much to bear.

MOVIE REVIEW
"Hamlet"



For these reasons, it comes as a great shock to discover that Michael Almereyda's "Hamlet" is the best film version of the play to date.

Hawke is the youngest actor yet to play Hamlet, and it may be his youth that lends itself so well to the brooding nature of the tragic hero.

The believable madness and suffering of the modern day Hamlet make past portrayals of the tormented prince by acclaimed actors, such as Kenneth Branagh and Mel Gibson, seem almost tame and stable.

As Hamlet, Hawke is so utterly consumed by his melancholy that every aspect of his being reflects it, from his greasy hair and sleep-deprived, sunken eyes to his rumpled clothing and sluggish manner. Hawke's melancholy is so passionate it is draining to watch.

Hamlet's strange behavior is magnified by his interactions with a brilliantly cast set of friends and family. Kyle McLachlan ("Twin Peaks") truly captures the cold-hearted essence of the treacherous Claudius as the head of an international multimedia corporation.

In a break from his traditionally comedic roles, Bill Murray is a pretentious, over-the-top Polonius. Julia Stiles ("Ten Things I Hate About You") is disappointing as Ophelia, Hamlet's love interest; her pouting falls short of the confused sadness needed for the role.

The film plays with the settings of "Hamlet." Instead of a cold medieval

castle, Elsinore is a bleak New York hotel where the president and CEO of the Denmark Corporation, murderous Claudius, resides.

Hamlet's famous "To be or not to be" soliloquy is delivered as Hawke peruses the aisles of a Blockbuster video store.

Even "The Mousetrap," Hamlet's play to "catch the conscience of the King," gets a makeover. Hawke's Hamlet is a film student, and his "play" is a short film of bits from sitcoms and cartoons.

The film does not completely avoid the jarring contrast of Shakespearean language and life with modern times. The deaths of Ophelia and Hamlet, in particular, lose some of their intensity because they do not easily translate into believable scenarios in the present.

Unlike previous versions of the play, Almereyda's "Hamlet" does not weigh itself down with the pomp of elaborate costumes and scenery. It's stark, bare and realistic, and a welcome change from the stuffy Shakespeare of the past.

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'Chicken Run' Great Film for All Ages

ARIADNE GUTHRIE
Staff Writer

The phrases "fun for the whole family," "G-rated" and "animated adventure" are often the kiss of death when used to describe a new movie. They automatically indicate to the movie-goers that this film will contain no violence, sex or explicit language and is, therefore, to be avoided at all costs.

MOVIE REVIEW
"Chicken Run"



Exceptions to the rule exist, however, and there is no better example than "Chicken Run," the new full-length clay-mation feature from animator Nick Park.

Park, whose short films "Creature Comforts," "A Close Shave" and "The Wrong Trousers" earned three Oscars, has gifted audiences with a movie that will salvage the reputation of family films.

"Chicken Run" is witty, charming, and just plain fun.

"Chicken Run" is the story of Ginger, voiced by Julia Sawalha of "Absolutely Fabulous", a hen determined to free her coop-mates from egg-laying slavery. After many failed attempts at escape, Ginger's situation becomes desperate: farm owner Mrs. Tweedy has decided to increase profits by abandoning the egg business and investing in a chicken potpie maker.

With the help of her fellow rebels, among them a cocky rooster named Rocky (voiced by Mel Gibson,

"Braveheart"), Ginger plans an ingenious escape and flies the coop (literally), taking all the hens with her.

It is rare to find the sort of quality in scripting and casting that "Chicken Run" has in any movie, rarer still in a family film. In blatant parody of adventure movies such as "The Great Escape" and "Shawshank Redemption" the chickens hatch half-baked escape plans and the result is not freedom, but a never-ending stream of sight gags. It is the perfect combination of clever dialogue and slapstick comedy.

The film owes its success to the marvelous pairing of animated character and voice. Park has a remarkable gift for luring the audience to believe that, although it is chickens talking - chickens with crayon-colored feathers and giant white teeth - this story is real. It is amaz-

ing the number of emotions those round eyes and beaks can express.

The actors providing the vocals for the heroic hens could not have been better chosen. Truly great actors, it seems, can even make chickens seem capable of emotions. The love which develops between Rocky and Ginger was every bit as convincing as any of Gibson's on-screen romances.

"Chicken Run" could rival the "Indiana Jones" movies in a competition for the perfect compromise movie; by combining equal parts comedy, romance, adventure, action and intelligence, no one will leave the theater without a smile and a sense of six dollars well-spent.

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Phish Delivers Jamming Show Live

KAREN WHICHARD
Staff Writer

Phish rolled through Raleigh Sunday night, playing before a sold out audience at Alltel Pavilion. The show ended a four-night stint for the band, which started in Tennessee and spent the weekend in Atlanta before the concert Sunday in Raleigh. Sunday night's show was a solid performance for the jam band well known for its epic tours and live performances.

CONCERT REVIEW
Phish
Alltel Pavilion
Sunday, June 26



The first set was stronger than the second, but both were excitingly unpredictable.

The show had a definite bluegrass twist to it, with "The Old Home Place" and "Uncle Pen" leading the way.

The best jam came with the closing song of the first set, "Split Open and Melt." Some of the songs during the first set seemed shorter than usual, which was probably due to the crowd's premature applause during the middle of most of the jams. "Split Open and Melt" gave the unorthodox audience a dose of the live jamming capabilities that carried Phish from midnight to sunrise during their New Year's Eve show.

Another highlight of the show was "Scent of a Mule," as song rarely played in concert. All four band members contributed to the tight jam that was a great follow-up to the slow ballad "Fast

Enough for You."

Keyboardist Page McConnell's delicate solo midway through "Mule's" jam stopped many concertgoers cold. The rare piano only solo melted into guitarist Trey Anastasio's somewhat odd guitar solo that left some laughing at the antics of the band and some confused.

Anastasio seemed to be playing children's songs and embellishing them with his pedal during the jam. "Mule's" main theme came roaring back however, and went into the wacky "Meat."

"Fast Enough for You," which was wedged between the speedy "Gotta Jiboo" and "Mule" was beautiful. The warm summer night's breeze combined with McConnell's keyboard provided the best slow moment of the show.

The first set also included "Punch You in the Eye," "Water in the Sky" and "Funky Bitch." Anastasio's guitar in "Funky Bitch" didn't compare to the guest appearance of Derek Trucks at Blockbuster Pavilion in Charlotte last summer, but was still impressive.

Phish didn't forget their new album,

"Farmhouse," during their Raleigh performance. Two songs off the new album, "Heavy Things" and "Dirt" were included in the first set, although "Dirt" should have been left in the studio.

"Maze" made a rare live appearance at the show as well. The long psychedelic jam gave the show an exciting bonus and left many fans a frenzy.

"Uncle Pen" was the first song in the encore, and livened up a show that was mellow at some points.

The loud crowd usually distorts the Raleigh performances by Phish, and this show was not an exception. Many of the jams in the first set seemed to be cut short, and it was difficult to hear some of the quieter moments of the show. Clapping along, considered rude by the Phish community because it distorts the jams, was in abundance as well.

Phish delivered nonetheless, and provided their fans with an energetic show that closed a phenomenal weekend.

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